

## **Title: Composing an Autumnal Masterpiece Project (CAMP)**

**Class/Grade: Individual – High School Honor Choir Students (11-12 grades)**

**Project:** This three-week project is to compose a seasonal composition that reflects the autumn season. The fall is a wonderful time of year because it contains many changes: school begins, temperatures begin to turn colder, and the leaves change colors and fall off the trees. During the fall season, exciting sports begin such as football. Special holidays and events such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, and religious holidays such as Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa are observed during this season as well. Your project assignment is to compose a song that musically reflects this season. This composition theme can be from a memory (happy or sad) during this time of year, a religious celebration, beautiful weather and colors of the season, or new relationships. There are many possibilities.

**There are four components to this project:**

**Creating Music** – you will compose your own composition.

**Performing Music** – you will record a basic piano track and a vocal track of your composition.

**Connecting to Music** – you will connect to music by utilizing musical elements that convey emotion of the music and lyric in your composition.

**Responding to Music** – you will respond to three other classmates' composition and critique the use of musical elements.

**Standards:** MU:Cn10.0.5a Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.

**Previous knowledge needed for this project:**

- Basic piano skills learned in weekly piano lab (freshman and sophomore years)
- Music listening skills
- Knowledge of basic harmonic structure
- Notation of treble and bass clef
- Rhythm notation
- Key signatures
- Musical elements: motif, melody, tonality, texture, timbre, dynamics, and lyrics
- Intervals – steps and leaps
- Accidentals

**Objectives: By the end of this project, students should be able to:**

- Recognize composition techniques such as melody, tonality, texture, timbre, rhythm, and the importance of lyrics in other musical genres.
- Utilize musical elements such as melody, tonality, texture, timbre, rhythm, and lyrics in your own composition.
- Demonstrate musical literacy by writing and performing your composition.
- Recognize and demonstrate how musical elements create emotional responses.
- Recognize that music has meaning personally and socially.

## Materials list

- Computer
- Noteflight <https://www.noteflight.com>
- Cell phone
- Bandlab <https://www.bandlab.com/>

Since this project is to compose an autumnal composition, please listen to some of links below to get some composition ideas. Here is a list of composition elements for which you should listen: melody, tonality, timbre, texture, dynamics, rhythm, meaning of the lyric (where applicable).

- Seasonal Music
- Classical Autumn on YouTube
  - <https://youtu.be/n2SkNtMmqnU>
  - <https://youtu.be/4fddGrDV2gw>
- Autumn Instrumental Music
  - Jennifer Higdon “Autumn Music” Quintet <https://youtu.be/KA8zWzGuDjg>
- Thanksgiving Classical Music
  - <https://youtu.be/LE9Q4JN-Yek>
- Popular Pop Songs about Autumn
  - Autumn Leaves – Ed Sheeran <https://youtu.be/eyB-ibmemnM>
  - September Song – Willie Nelson <https://youtu.be/OXXKP-Ip4z8>
  - Jim Croce – Time in a Bottle <https://youtu.be/dO1rMeYnOmM>
  - Earth, Wind and Fire – September <https://youtu.be/Gs069dndIYk>
  - Autumn in New York – Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong <https://youtu.be/50zL8TnMBN8>
  - When September Ends – Green Days <https://youtu.be/jVO8sUrs-Pw>
  - Holiday music
  - The Christmas Song – Nat King Cole <https://youtu.be/hwacxSnc4tI>
  - A Classic Christmas – Tony Bennett, Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra <https://youtu.be/LE9Q4JN-Yek>
  - Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy from *The Nutcracker* <https://youtu.be/zV1qLYukTH8>
  - Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy – Pentatonix [https://youtu.be/jt3oAyK\\_IG8](https://youtu.be/jt3oAyK_IG8)
  - Classical Christmas <https://youtu.be/PrFCdi7apV8>
- Hanukkah music
  - <https://www.classicalmpr.org/story/2017/12/11/8-songs-for-8-nights-music-for-hanukkah>
- Kwanzaa music
  - <https://www.songsforteaching.com/kwanzaasongs/>

## Creating Music - the Composing Process

### A. Week One

- a. Listen to the music links given in this project (and others that you might find) to gather musical ideas. Brainstorm about lyrical concepts and decide on a subject matter that pertains to the autumn season.
- b. Decide on a key signature that is appropriate for your voice type.
- c. Decide on a time signature and tempo. A time signature, tempo, and rhythmic patterns can help to create mood, movement, and energy within your composition. Make sure these elements reflect the message you want to lyrically convey.
  - d. Your song must have lyrics. Decide on a lyrical theme and begin composing a melodic line for the melody.
    1. How to write a melody. Here are some elements you might want to consider.
      1. Stepwise motion (moving by scale steps)
      2. Interval leaps
      3. Shape of the melodic line (melodic lines typically rise and fall)
      4. Rhythm
  - e. Compose melody in Noteflight and post to our class HUB by Saturday, 11:59pm.

### B. Week Two

- a. Composition structure must contain an introduction (4-8 measures), verse 1 (at least 8 measures), chorus (at least 8 measures and contain 2-part voicing), verse 2 (at least 8 measures) and an ending (4-8 measures).
  1. Elements to consider when writing lyrics.
    1. The lyrics typically tell a story and are descriptive.
    2. A chorus is the main point or “thesis statement” of the song both lyrically and musically.
    3. The syllabic emphasis of the words should match rhythmic notation.
  2. Rhythmic variation
    1. You may use any rhythm or rhythm combination. It is important to use rhythmic patterns that reflect the emotion of the lyric and melodic line. Typically, composers do not use faster rhythms such as sixteenth notes to convey sadness.
  3. Write an ending to your song
    1. You may use a cadential ending (ii, V, I) (IV, V, I) chord structure to compose closure to your composition.
  4. Compose a rough draft of your song including a title and basic harmonic (chord) structure and upload to our class HUB by Saturday, 11:59pm. I will give you feedback on your composition.

## Performing Music

### C. Week Three

- a. Make corrections according to the feedback.
- b. Compose an updated version of your song in Noteflight and save to pdf.
- c. Record a piano track in the piano lab in Bandlab.
- d. Record a vocal track with the piano track in Bandlab or record on your cellphone a video of you singing with the piano track.
- e. Upload the final pdf version of your composition and an mp3/mp4 of your recording to the Final Project section in our class HUB to be graded.
- f. Upload the final pdf version of your composition and an mp3/mp4 of your recording to the Final Project Discussion Board in our class HUB.
- g. This portion of the project is due Thursday, 11:59pm

## **Responding and Connecting to Music**

Respond to the three other students' final projects whose names follow your name on the alphabetical class roll. If you are the last person on the roll, please respond to the first three names. In the discussion board, write a critique of the composition mechanics and a response that includes how you emotionally or personally connected to their composition. Your response can include a personal or a cultural/social connection. This portion of the project is due by Sunday, 11:59pm.

## **Grading**

You will be graded on composition, vocal performance, and discussion responses. Below are two rubrics—performance and composition. I will average these two grades together for a final grade. Your discussion grade will be a separate grade.

## COMPOSITION RUBRIC

<b>COMPOSITION ELEMENTS</b>	<b>EXCELLENT - 20 POINTS</b>	<b>GOOD - 16 POINTS</b>	<b>NEEDS IMPROVEMENT - 12 POINTS</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>COMPOSITION LAYOUT</b></p> <p><b>Is there a clear structure with introduction, verses, chorus, and ending? Does the notation look uniform throughout composition? Are chord symbols placed correctly above measures?</b></p>	<p>Clear indication of introduction, verses, chorus and ending. Notation is consistent throughout entire composition. All chord symbols are places correctly.</p>	<p>Somewhat clear indication of introduction, verses, chorus, and ending. Notation is mostly consistent, but also contains some errors throughout composition. Most chord symbols are placed correctly, but also contains some errors.</p>	<p>Unclear indication of introduction, verses, chorus and ending. Notation is inconsistent throughout composition. Chord symbols are placed incorrectly.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NOTES</b></p> <p><b>Is the key signature appropriate for vocal range? Is there sufficient melodic phrasing that includes intervals of steps and leaps? Are the notes written correctly? Are chord symbols written correctly?</b></p>	<p>Key signature is perfect for vocal range. Clear melodic phrasing that includes steps and leaps. All notes are written correctly. All chord symbols correspond with melody and harmony.</p>	<p>Key signature is somewhat appropriate for vocal range. Melodic phrasing is a awkward and contains mostly steps. Most notes are written correctly, but also contain a few errors. A few chord symbols are incorrect.</p>	<p>Key signature is wrong for vocal part. Melodic phrasing is awkward and monotone. More than half of the notes are written incorrectly. Most of the chord symbols are incorrect.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>LYRICS</b></p> <p><b>Do the lyrics have a rhyme scheme and tell a story? Does the chorus serve as the "thesis statement" of the lyric?</b></p>	<p>The lyrics have a definite rhyme scheme. The lyrics convey a story. The chorus fully defines the song.</p>	<p>Inconsistent rhyme scheme. The lyrical story is somewhat unclear. The chorus somewhat defines the song.</p>	<p>Rhyme scheme is unclear. The lyrical story is unclear. The chorus and verses do not fit together lyrically.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>RHYTHM</b></p> <p><b>Does the time signature, tempo, ad rhythmic patterns help to create mood, movement, and/or intensity?</b></p>	<p>The rhythm helps to create mood, movement, and/or intensity.</p>	<p>The rhythm is somewhat used to create mood, movement, and/or intensity.</p>	<p>The rhythm does not help to create mood, movement, and/or intensity.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>DYNAMICS</b></p> <p><b>Does the composition contain appropriate dynamic levels appropriate to melodic phrasing and lyrical content? Are dynamic marking placed correctly?</b></p>	<p>Dynamic levels are appropriate throughout composition and are placed correctly in the music.</p>	<p>Dynamic levels are appropriate throughout composition, but also contain a few errors. Dynamic markings are placed correctly in the music, but also contain a few errors.</p>	<p>Dynamic levels are inappropriate throughout composition or nonexistent.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>GRADING SCALE</b></p> <p>100-90 (A) 89-80 (B) 79-70 (C) Below 69 (D)</p>	<b>TOTAL COLUMN SCORE</b>	<b>TOTAL COLUMN SCORE</b>	<b>TOTAL COLUMN SCORE</b>	<i>Final Grade</i>

## VOCAL PERFORMANCE RUBRIC

<b><i>MUSICAL ELEMENTS</i></b>	<b><i>EXCELLENT - 20 POINTS</i></b>	<b><i>GOOD - 16 POINTS</i></b>	<b><i>NEEDS IMPROVEMENT - 12 POINTS</i></b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>TONE</b> Tone quality Tone production	Pitches are resonant and performed with excellent tone quality conducive to the genre of the composition.	Pitches are generally resonant and performed with good tone quality conducive to the genre of the composition.	The student has difficulty maintaining a resonant tone quality.	
<b>RHYTHM PROFICIENCY</b> Tempo Rhythmic accuracy	The student performs rhythms correctly and maintains the correct tempo throughout the composition.	Most rhythms and tempo are performed accurately, but with a few mistakes.	Rhythms are generally performed incorrectly; and tempo is unsteady and insecure.	
<b>MUSICIANSHIP PROFICIENCY</b> Dynamics Phrasing Articulations	Dynamics written in the score are observed. The student's phrasing communicates the intention and emotion of the piece. Correct and appropriate articulation is used.	Most dynamics are observed. Phrasing suggests minimal understanding of the piece. Most articulations are correct and communicate appropriate style.	Few dynamic changes are observed. Phrasing is poorly executed. Articulations are poorly executed.	
<b>TECHNICAL PROFICIENCY</b> Notes Intonation Breath support	The student performs correct notes throughout the piece with excellent intonation and breath support.	The student performs most notes correctly; however, contains a few note errors. Intonation and breath support are good overall.	Most notes are incorrect. The student's overall intonation during the performance is poor due to lack of breath support.	
<b>KINESICS</b> Attitude Posture Confidence	The student exudes self-confidence and has excellent singing posture.	The student displays adequate self-confidence and singing posture.	The student lacks self-confidence and lacks proper singing posture.	
<b>GRADING SCALE</b> 100-90 (A) 89-80 (B) 79-70 (C) Below 69 (D)	<b>TOTAL COLUMN SCORE</b>	<b>TOTAL COLUMN SCORE</b>	<b>TOTAL COLUMN SCORE</b>	<i>Final Grade</i>