

Lesson – *Your Voice is Your Instrument*

Companion Video – “Dr. Nick” by PROJECT Trio

Suggested Grade Level

Grades 5-8

Objective

Students will learn the techniques behind beatboxing and will be able to demonstrate a basic beatbox pattern. Students will view beatboxing practices in performance by watching the BPO recording of “Dr. Nick” featuring the ensemble, PROJECT Trio.

Suggested Materials

- BPO video of “Dr. Nick” by PROJECT Trio

New York State Arts Standards

MU:Cr1.1.5a-8a
MU:Cr2.1.5b-8b
MU:Pr6.1.5a-8a
MU:Cn10.1.5a-8a

New York State English Language Arts & Literacy Standards

Speaking & Listening, Standard 1, 2, & 3
Language, Standard 1, 3 & 6

Procedure

The human voice is an instrument that we all possess. It is powerful and has many unique capabilities in producing musical sounds. Beatboxing is a form of vocal percussion involving the art of mimicking the sound of drum machines, using one’s mouth, lips, tongue and voice.

- 1) Provide students with some background of the beatbox genre. The term “beatboxing” comes from mimicking the sound of early drum machines, then known as “beatboxes.” A drum machine is an electronic musical instrument that creates percussion sounds, drum beats, and patterns. Human beatboxing in hip-hop music began in the 1980s and has since evolved to be used in several genres of music and as a genre all its own.
- 2) Introduce the group, PROJECT Trio, to students. PROJECT Trio is a performance group made up of a flutist, cellist and double bass player. The members compose and arrange most of their own music, featuring trio works as well as works with orchestra. The

Lesson – *Your Voice is Your Instrument* (continued)

- performers are dedicated to sharing the joy of “jamming” on classical instruments and encouraging improvisation through music.
- 3) Have students view the beatboxing lesson demonstrated by a member of PROJECT Trio. Have them follow along with the demonstration and participate in practicing the beatboxing techniques.
 - 4) Have the students listen through the BPO performance with PROJECT Trio. What did they think about the music? Where else may students have heard beatboxing before? Ask students to identify other artists or ensembles that may utilize the beatbox technique in their music.
 - 5) Have students create their own short beatboxing pattern using the words provided in the beatbox demonstration (*boots, cats, BBQ*). Have them notate the pattern in written form by writing the words in the given pattern. Have students record themselves performing their beatbox pattern, or perform in real-time for the class.

Extended In-Person Learning

Have students record themselves performing a beatbox pattern. Then have students perform on an instrument of their choice, or sing an improvised composition in real-time with the recorded beatbox accompaniment.

