



WILD THINGS PROJECT



The technology part of this project is all done by the teacher outside of the regular music class time. It was used originally with 3rd graders.

Objective: To give students' the opportunity to compose their own "film" music and to help them understand the thought process a composer goes through as he or she makes decisions about a piece they're writing

Materials used: Where the Wild Things Are (Maurice Sendak), Video of Where the Wild Things Are (see resources below), Audacity, PowerPoint, microphone to record (for computers without a built-in one), scanner, Optional additional materials—video of Where the Wild Things Are opera (I borrowed mind from the public library.), recording of music from Where the Wild Things Are ballet (I got mine online.) I also found a ballet company in Texas that had performed the ballet and they generously sent me a 3 minute clip of different scenes from their archived video recording. (It never hurts to ask!)

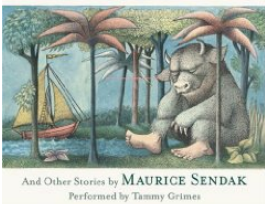
Set Up Comments: Scan the pictures from the book (you need to own this book in order to do this legally) and insert one picture on each slide of a new PowerPoint project. You could use this slideshow to project as you read the story aloud to your students rather than using one book in front of them (although there's something cozy about "storytime" in music class ☺).

Tech Notes:

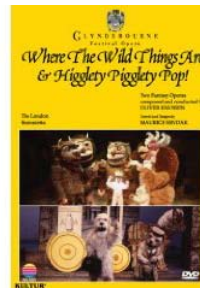
See Classroom Recordings handout for directions on how to record your classroom performance in Audacity.

Resources:

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

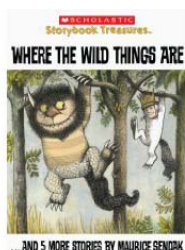


Where the Wild Things Are and other stories by Maurice Sendak (CD) performed by **Tammy Grimes**



Knussen, Sendak: Where The Wild Things Are / Higglety Pigglety Pop! (2009 DVD)

Ballet score by **Randall Woolf**
<http://www.randallwoolf.com/compositions.html>



Scholastic Video with music by Peter Schickele (DVD)

Judy Meyer Hays
OutsideTheBox93.org



Warner Brother's 2009 movie and/or soundtrack



Lesson Plans

Day One:

1. Introduction: *Play a brief piece of program music you may have been studying or your students are familiar with and discuss what choices the composer made regarding tempo, instruments, dynamics, and articulation.*
2. Read aloud *Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak.*
3. Discuss the story including the characters and the plot. *Make sure students are clear about the story order and the characters involved in each part. (Our discussion led to this: 1) Max being naughty 2)Max in his room where it changes 3)Max traveling to where the wild things are 4)the Wild Things roar etc. 5)The Wild Rumpus 6)Max becomes lonely... 7)Max sails back home*
4. Show *Where the Wild Things Are video (music by Peter Schickele; DVD available through Scholastic) encouraging students to pay particular attention to the music for each section and how it helps to tell the story. (If you have any extra time carry on a discussion about the choices the composer made.)*

Day Two: (You can do this project without Day Two if you choose not to obtain the optional materials listed above.)

1. Review *the parts of the story and its characters. Talk briefly about how the music on the video helped to tell the story. Ask “What would we have to do to make it a ballet or an opera?”*
2. **Ballet** (Be sure to define this art form if your students are not familiar with it.) *Listen to brief excerpts of CD for the different sections you’ve divided the story into. Discuss the music and what decisions the composer made.*
3. **Opera** (Be sure to define this musical art form if your students are not familiar with it.) *View excerpts of the opera video. What’s better or worse/ same or different from what we’ve experienced so far? (Depending upon the particular group of students, I have shown this entire opera.)*
4. *Share that next music class we’ll be composing our own music to accompany the Where the Wild Things Are story.*

Day Three:

1. Review *Read the book one more time.*
2. Set Up *Divide into groups to compose based on the different parts of the story as we've determined earlier (Students determine the # of groups needed but I number them randomly to create groups.) Consider the following options: Should there be anything we all do together? Is there any part that we can use twice (repetition)? Should we add any words?*
3. Planning *(Make Some Decisions handout using reverse side to record plan) Show your plan to the teacher in order to begin practicing.*
4. Practice *Try your ideas—make any changes you want—then rehearse some more. In order to be prepared to perform again at our next class, you'll want to be sure that your written plan reflects your changes and final decisions. (I collect their "plan" so that it is available for our recording session next class.)*

Day Four:

1. Practice *Review what was planned before getting instruments. Practice one last time—don't allow too much time here.*
2. Performance *Record each groups' composition using Audacity as the other groups listen. If time allows, encourage positive comments from listening groups or discuss the decisions the performing group made*

On Your Own: *Use Audacity to rearrange, cut, splice, copy as needed until you've got one combined composition. Open your PowerPoint slideshow of the scanned pictures and on the first story slide choose Insert from the top Menu. Choose Movies and Sounds, Sound from file, and browse to where you stored your final sound file. Say yes when asked if you want the sound to play automatically. Now under Slideshow at the top menu choose Rehearse timings and click the mouse each time you want to change slides. You'll need to do this a few times before you get it just the way you want it.*

Day Five:

Share the final slideshow with your students. Consider a reflective writing opportunity where students can indicate what they liked best, compare it to the professional productions they viewed etc.

More Time? Show excerpts from WB's 2009 movie or better yet just portions of the soundtrack for each part of the story and compare/contrast both the story plot and the way the music is used.