

Secondary 11

Innovation and Creativity in Musical Instruments

Michelle Rose

Grade Level/Class

Upper Secondary Grades

60 Minute Music Class

Overall Theme

Music and musical instruments are filled with and extended by layers upon layers of rich meaning that are built up by everyone who participates in the music making process – performers, listeners, producers, engineers, makers, retailers, and countless more. This lesson explores how instruments can be reinterpreted beyond their original intentions to inspire creativity.

Essential Questions

3. Why do people make changes to musical instruments?
2. How does society influence the innovation of music?
3. Why is innovation important in the field of music?

National Standards

Connect

MU:Cn11.0.T.1a Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts and daily life.

Create

MU:Cr1.1.T.1a Generate melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas for compositions or improvisations using digital tools.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Describe the innovative changes made to various instruments.
2. Explain the contributions of Don Lewis and The Live Electronic Orchestra.
3. Explain how modern DJs embrace creativity and innovation.
4. Create a beat using a digital tool (Beepbox.co).

Materials Needed

1. S11 Presentation
2. Student computers with internet access
3. S11 Worksheet (Exit Ticket)

Procedures

Lesson Introduction (5 Min):

- Teacher (T) will introduce a warm-up/hook question “What is something you wish existed that would make your life better?” You can have students brainstorm ideas that are music-related or not.
- Students (S) will brainstorm answers. S can complete a “think-pair-share” or share out with the whole group.

Lesson Activity (45 Min):

- T will briefly explain that people have been motivated to innovate and make changes to instruments for many reasons. T will explain that S will look at several examples of instrument innovations.
- T will introduce double bell euphonium by showing a slide of euphonium and double bell euphonium and ask “*What do you notice?*”
- S will respond to the question either in the whole group or S can discuss it with a partner.
- T will explain double bell euphonium (innovation from single bell) and play a video example of double bell euphonium (embedded in slide with correct timing) optional: T asks S to describe the differences between the larger and smaller bell sounds after viewing the video.
- T will explain Victory Vertical Piano (innovation out of necessity due to WWII) and play a video example.
- T will ask S what purpose the piano served in WWII. (Why was music/entertainment important during WWII?).
- S will respond as a full group or can discuss in small groups/pairs.
- T will introduce Don Lewis and the Live Electronic Orchestra (LEO).
- T will ask S to think about the following question before viewing the interview with Don Lewis video “*What experiences influenced Don Lewis to be able to innovate and create the Live Electronic Orchestra?*” and then will play the video.
- S will respond to the above question individually or in small groups.
- T will ask S to think about the following question before viewing the Don Lewis influence video “*How did Don Lewis influence the music industry?*” and then will play the video.
- S will respond to the above question individually or in small groups.
- T will move to the next slide and explain how innovation/creativity opens the door for even more innovation/creativity in the future.
- T will demonstrate examples of further innovation through DJing examples. T will play videos.
- T will introduce Beepbox.co composition activity. T will go over directions (included in slides).
- S will create their own beat using Beepbox.co.
- Optional: S will share what they created.

Assessment Strategies

Wrap-up and Assessment (10 Min):

T shares an exit ticket and students complete it before leaving class.

Extensions/Adaptations

Have students add more to their beepbox.co lesson (change the 1 to another number in beepbox.co to get a blank page for more music making), encourage students to add melodic elements in Beepbox.co.

Adaptations

- Provide a copy of the [Beepbox.co composition directions](#) to students who may need directions repeated.
- Use closed captions for videos, and allow text-to-speech for any required readings.
- Allow students to use speech-to-text to dictate their answers rather than writing.
- Edit Exit Ticket to include images to aid in comprehension of the questions being asked.
- Provide students with individual copies of the slideshow to take notes for future reference.

Spotlight on Careers in Music

This lesson plan can be tied to specific careers in music:

- Instrumentalist
- DJ
- Performer
- Music software developer
- Instrument Technician
- Engineer

For comprehensive information on careers in the music industry, please visit [Consider a Career in Music](#)