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Practicing Metacognitive Awareness with Guided Lecture Notes

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BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

I teach an Elements of Music course for music minors and a general populous of engineering, business and architecture students needing to earn a general arts credit. I have experienced many challenges in teaching such a course in the Middle East where students have never been exposed to any elements of western music or history. The course surveys the entire gamut of western music and history, while simultaneously giving a foundational understanding of music literacy. Given the vast parameters of the course, students are expected to have strong independent study skills. While study habits are primarily individual and differ with each student, I found students not prepared or equipped with basic study skills required to be successful in the course. The most basic skill that was lacking was the ability to take notes or organize the material being discussed in class. In addition, student feedback on end of course evaluations revealed that information and material discussed in class was so unfamiliar and vast that students did not know how to organize or digest the information. From the gathered data, I inferred that students needed a note-taking model, an opportunity to take notes on their own volition, and a moment to reflect on their note taking abilities. By implementing the aforementioned objectives, I wanted to observe whether or not said objectives would encourage students to think in a metacognitive manner and would perhaps be awakened to the importance of metacognitive practices regarding their own study habits.

METHOD

Due to the pedagogical “bumps” that I experienced in my first semester of teaching Elements of Music, I decided to create a sequential curriculum (see Figure 1) that would provide students with guided lecture notes¹. The purpose of these notes were two-fold: 1) help students structure information being discussed during class 2) help students remember, reflect, and re-organize course content during independent study. The sequential curriculum was in line with the syllabus and students were not educated about note taking skills, but were merely provided with guided lecture notes that I prepared prior to each class meeting.

Three guided lecture notes were given over a three-week period (see Appendix A). Each week the guided lecture notes were designed to incorporate a progressive guide for helping students become more metacognitive aware of proper note taking habits during in-class lectures. The first guided lecture notes were designed to orient students to the process of taking notes in an outline format and contained fill in the blank areas that were curated

¹ Guided notes are defined as "teacher-prepared handouts that 'guide' a student through a lecture with standard cues and prepared space in which to write the key facts, concepts, and/or relationships" (Heward, 1994, p. 304).

throughout the outline. Subsequent guided lecture notes included reflective questions at the end of the lecture. Lecture 2 contained recall questions and Lecture 3 contained essay questions concerning content that was discussed during the lecture. All three guided lecture notes were collected after each class and data recorded on how many students completed the entire handout and rated on its overall completion (i.e. number of blanks left on the handout). Lecture 4 (the Classical Lecture) did not use guided lecture notes and no instruction or requirements for note taking was given to students because I wanted to observe how many students saw the need to take notes of their own volition.

Following the review session (see Figure 1) a midterm exam was administered. The midterm exam consisted of multiple choice, fill in the blank, and true or false questions and were copied verbatim from the previous semester exam so data could be compared with how students not exposed to guided lecture notes scored on the same questions. After the midterm exam, students were given a survey via Google Forms and were asked questions regarding the usefulness of the guided lecture notes. Finally, I gave a ten-minute lecture that informed students on the data gathered in the questionnaire, statistics on how many students completed each handout during each lecture, and the exam scores from students who used guided lecture notes with students who did not use guided lecture notes in the Fall semester.

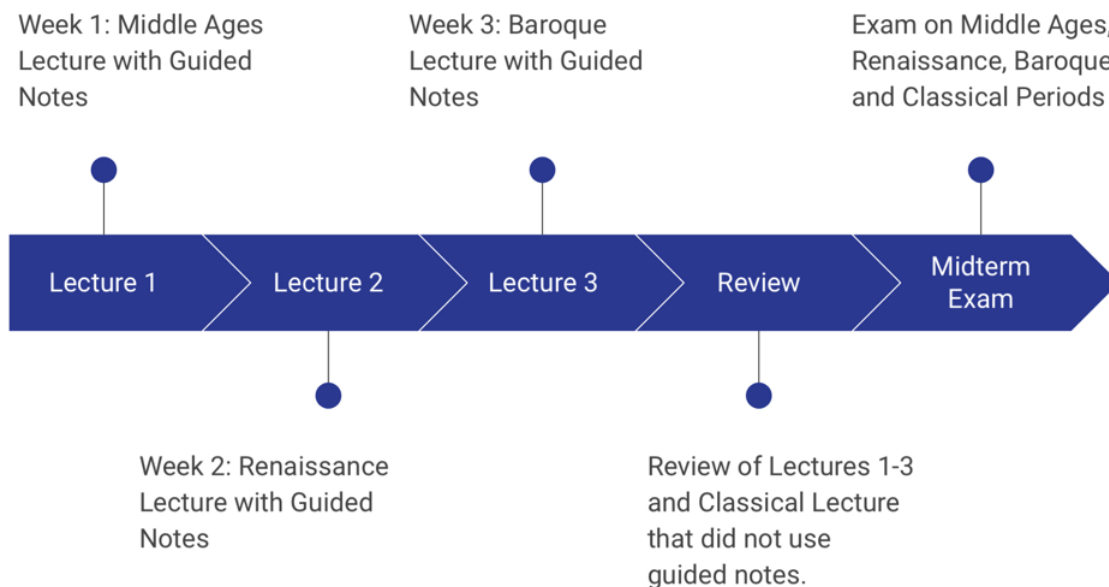


FIGURE 1. SEQUENTIAL CURRICULUM FOR GUIDED LECTURE NOTES

DATA OUTCOMES

All students enrolled in Elements of Music for Spring semester participated in the study ($n = 29$), however, due to random class absences, Lecture 1 had 27 participants, Lecture 2 had 28 participants and Lecture 3 had 25 participants. A set of 30 questions derived directly from the lecture notes were used on the midterm exam for students in Spring semester ($n = 29$) and the final exam for students from Fall semester ($n = 28$). Each exam question ($n = 30$) was scored as correct or incorrect on both Fall and Spring student exams and the total number of incorrect answers was calculated for each student. An independent t -test revealed no significant difference between groups, $t(53) = 1.02$, $p = .31$; Fall Semester ($M = 4.9$, $SD = 3.4$) and Spring Semester ($M = 4.0$, $SD = 2.9$).

On a more positive note regarding the incorporation of the guided lecture notes, students who participated in the questionnaire ($n = 23$) gave strongly positive ratings for the notes. They rated their overall satisfaction on a 3-point Likert scale choosing between unsatisfactory, satisfactory continuum and extremely satisfactory. Results indicated 69.6% ($n = 15$) of students surveyed were extremely satisfied with using guided lecture notes and 30.4% ($n = 7$) of students chose the middle option, indicating neither unsatisfied nor extremely satisfied. Open-ended student feedback on using teacher guided lecture notes is represented in Table 1.

Table 1. Student Feedback Using Guided Lecture Notes

Pros	Cons
“Provides important details and helps us focus on what is more important”	“More detailed questions”
“Guides me through the chapters while studying from the book”	“Sometimes the questions are vague and need clarification”
“They were a very good guide when it came to studying for midterms as they summarized the main concepts“	“Include a list of keywords”
“These outlines make it easier to understand and absorb the material faster”	“The information was a lot and we didn't have enough time to complete it during class while the professor was explaining it. Sometimes I felt I couldn't keep up the pace while listening to the lecture and writing thus I left many blanks to fill in later which made me unsure of my answers.”

OBSERVATIONS

The primary purpose of this research study was to 1) help students structure information being discussed during class 2) help students remember, reflect, and re-organize course content during independent study. The study illuminated the fact that when students organize, reflect, and collaborate with their teachers on their own learning it improves the pedagogical process. Although the data does not necessarily confirm that guided lecture notes improves test scores, it would be remiss to not acknowledge that students do enjoy being provided with a structure for organizing the information presented during lectures. In addition, no negative feedback concerning the amount of material or organizational components of the course were received on end-of-course student evaluations.

The intent of helping students take personal initiative on using guided lecture notes in Lecture 4 (see Figure 1) and giving an informative ten-minute lecture on the possible gains of using such an organizational scheme when listening to class lectures was to help students to think more about their own study skills. However, generally speaking, I did not observe a change in the majority of classroom behavior with students beginning to practice metacognition regarding their own study habits. I actually observed students wanting or expecting the guided lecture notes for every class. The end-of-course student evaluations even noted that students wanted guided lecture notes for each class lecture. Even though students positively reflected on the usefulness of the guided lecture notes, I observed a disconnect in motivating students to take personal initiative for their personal study habits.

Future research should investigate the link between in-class lectures and how students become more self-directed within their own independent study habits.

REFERENCES

Heward, W. L. (1994). Three “low-tech” strategies for increasing the frequency of active student response during group instruction. In R. Gardner, III, D. M. Sainato, J. O. Cooper, T. E. Heron, W. L. Heward, J. Eshleman, & T. A. Grossi (Eds.), *Behavior analysis in education: Focus on measurably superior instruction* (pp. 283–320). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

APPENDIX A

Lecture 1

THE MIDDLE AGES: 400-1400

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Why was the church so important to the development of music?
- Discuss significant musical developments that took place in the Middle Ages.

A. Medieval Culture

The class system that governed the middle ages was known as _____

- i. What and who helped break down the social systems in place?
- ii. How did the spread of Christianity help education?

B. Music designed for use in the Christian liturgy was known as _____

C. What two innovations in music helped propel western music forward?

- i.
- ii.

D. Vocal music for church services from the Middle Ages is known as _____

- i. Who codified this music and why?
- ii. Title of Music Example: _____
 1. What is the form of this music?
 2. What is the meaning of the text used in the chant?
 3. What are some characteristics of this music?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

2. RISE OF SECULAR SONG AND POLYPHONY

A. Music Terminology

- i. Music with only one line of sound is known as _____
- ii. The highest and lowest note of a melody is known as its _____
- iii. The overall shape of a melody is known as its _____
- iv. When melodies have many pitches to one syllable it is known as _____ and when there is only one syllable to one pitch, it is referred to as _____
- v. Melodies were governed by a tonal organization known as _____
 1. List the four basic types of _____
 - a.
 - b.

c.

d.

B. When did the first Secular Songs appear and who were the composers?

- i. What was the subject matter of the Secular Songs?
- ii. Examples of Secular Song
 1. *Title:* _____ | *Composer & Date:* _____
 2. *Musical Features:* _____
 3. *Title:* _____ | *Composer & Date:* _____
 4. *Musical Features:* _____

C. Two or more lines of sound moving independently of each other is _____

- i. The first great collection of this music was by _____ and _____.
The collection of compositions by these two men is known as _____.
- ii. The beginnings of this music originated by composers using intervals of _____
- iii. This type of music was officially known as _____
- iv. Example of this music
 1. *Title:* _____ | *Composer & Date:* _____
 2. *Musical Features:* _____

Lecture 2

THE RENAISSANCE: _____ - _____

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- What was life like during the Renaissance?
- Identify and discuss major characteristics of Renaissance Music.
- What role did music have during the Counter-Reformation?

A. RENAISSANCE CULTURE

- I.
- II.
- III.

B. MUSICIANS DURING THE RENAISSANCE

- I.
- II.
- III.
- IV.

C. CHARACTERISTICS IN RENAISSANCE MUSIC

- I.
- II.
- III.
- IV.

D. EARLY RENAISSANCE MUSIC

- I. Famous Composers included _____ & _____
- II. The five parts of the mass that are typically set to music because they remain the same, regardless of the day, feast, or season are: _____, _____, _____, _____, _____
- III. The texture of the music is primarily _____

E. MID-RENAISSANCE MUSIC

- I. Famous Composer from the mid-Renaissance was _____
- II. One of his well known compositions was _____

- i. The chant from the mass was written by _____
- ii. The mass was composed for what four voice types:
- iii. The composition contains what musical characteristics:
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
- iv. The text from the first movement of the mass translates as:

F. REFORMATIONS AND MUSIC

- I. The Counter-Reformation addressed the following issues with music:
 - i. Secular songs were.....
 - ii. Singers had become.....
 - iii. Polyphony had become.....

G. LATE RENAISSANCE MUSIC

- I. A chordal texture of harmony, called _____ was introduced
 - i. Cadential points in the music contained the interval of a _____
- II. The center of music activities was _____
- III. Famous Composer of Vocal Music during the late Renaissance was _____
 - i. Melodies were primarily _____
 - ii. If leaps occurred, a _____ followed in the opposite direction.
 - iii. The rhythm was not _____, but was always _____ & _____.

H. RENAISSANCE MUSIC

- I. Renaissance _____
 - i. Usually sung by a small _____
 - ii. All voices sang the _____ text
 - iii. Music textures included: _____ & _____
 - iv. Music Example: “_____”
 - 1. Music Characteristics:
- II. The _____
 - i. _____ secular vocal pieces sung with a small group of singers
 - ii. Text was usually about _____, nature, and _____
 - iii. Well known composer included: _____
 - 1. Music Example: _____
- III. _____ Music
 - i. _____ was a well known composer
 - 1. Composed the _____, which was a contrapuntal instrumental piece based on the style of _____ songs
 - ii. Tileman _____ was another composer of _____ music
 - 1. Composer Example: “_____”
 - a. Music Characteristics:

I. LECTURE QUIZ (SEE POWERPOINT FOR QUESTIONS)

I. QUESTION 1 ANSWER:

- i.
- ii.
- iii.
- iv.
- v.

II. QUESTION 2 ANSWER:

- i.

- ii.
 III. QUESTION 3 ANSWER:
 i.
 ii.
 iii.

Lecture 3

THE BAROQUE ERA: _____ - _____

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Describe Life in the Baroque Period
- Summarize the musical changes that occurred in the Baroque era.
- Explain the influence of monody in music compositions?
- Summarize the difference in “prima & seconda prattica” in music.
- Describe how the fixed musical forms flourished with Vivaldi, Bach, and Handel

The baroque era was a time of absolute _____

- _____ & _____ were valued above all else in society and the arts.
- Scientists began to test ideas by _____ rather than _____
- Doctrine of Affections was solidified by _____ and included:

In Baroque art, _____ & _____ are the dominant forces.

- Similarly, music set out to portray different emotions through the use of _____ & _____.
- Fascinations with structure and organization resulted in fixed musical forms:
 - Vocal Forms Included: _____, _____, _____, _____.
 - Instrumental Forms Included: _____, _____, _____.
- A type of music written for solo voice and basso continuo is known as _____.
 - Who were the composers who experimented with this music and why?
 - The first well known opera, _____, was composed by _____ and included two general styles of music known as _____ & _____.
 - English composer, _____, composed _____ & _____
 - The _____ had simple _____ accompaniments and the _____ were usually accompanied by full orchestra with a melodic form of _____
- The rise of instrumental music saw the development of the _____ & _____
 - Vivaldi was an important composer of _____ music and developed the _____
 - One specific example of his music is
 - Title: _____ | Composer & Date: _____
 - Musical Features: _____

Use the following letters to map the overall form of the music: A E a* (each letter can be used more than once)

_____. _____ . _____ . _____ . _____ . _____ . _____ . _____ . _____ . _____ .

- Two other influential composers of the Baroque were _____ & _____
 - _____ composed in all Baroque instrumental and vocal styles, except _____
 - _____ was a master at _____ and his music has served as a model.
 - _____ music is attractive, simple and tuneful; an “art that hides art”
 - _____ composed opera, oratorio, and instrumental music.
- Baroque Music Characteristics:

-
- _____ music is important as vocal music. Music was organized by a hierarchy of _____ & _____. The unifying feature of this music is the _____.

LECTURE ESSAY QUESTIONS: Write a well-constructed paragraph for each essay question. (Min. 5 sentences in length)

Summarize the difference in “prima & seconda prattica” in music.

- Explain the influence of monody in music compositions?