

**Learning Objective:**

The student will improvise a rhythmic ostinato that complements three other different rhythmic ostinatos that are being played simultaneously, keeping a steady beat.

**Content/Language Objective:**

Students will orally explain how listening to other musicians increases their ability to improvise using the words "focus", "teamwork", "complement", "steady beat", and "patterns" with a shoulder partner.

**Grade Levels:**

6 – 7 – 8

**Standards:**

Standard #2: Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.

Standard #3: Improvising melodies, variations and accompaniments.

**Introduction:**

1. Complement – Ask students to come up with examples of people or things that complement each other such as:
  - Ice cream and chocolate sauce, nuts, fruit.
  - Straight man and comic.
  - Coffee and cream.
2. Cultural Connection – West African and African-American children learn teamwork through partner hand clapping and rhythmic chanting. Have students in class demonstrate if they know how to do this.
3. Review the *Helpful Hints for Rhythm Complements* (World Music Drumming Teacher Edition p. 24)
  - Leave space for others.
  - Play different patterns than others.
  - Play in the holes.
  - Play different tone colors.

**Connections:**

Students are making a connection within their drumming groups. They must rely on others and be dependable with their patterns. The students are also aware of the people and the cultures that drumming represents. By studying, learning and performing ensembles from around the world; learning where they came from; and in what context the ensemble would be performed, the students are developing a sense of respect for world cultures and are realizing the similarities while downplaying the differences.

**Risk-Taking:**

Improvisation can be a risk for some students as it involves being able to play a pattern independently, yet within the framework of what the group has established. For many of the ELA students, the extension of adding words to the drumming patterns can be a huge

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risk. But by including this type of activity in their warm-ups, they become more confident, often using those examples as their contribution to the extension of the activity.

#### **Imagination:**

Adding other percussion instruments, using body percussion and vocalization, the small groups are able to expand their repertoire of sounds. Adding words to either demonstrate the improvised patterns or using words to tell a story with their improvisation, the students can create a drum composition that is uniquely their own.

#### **Sensory Experience:**

Hearing the drum beats, watching the hands move at different times, feeling the beat in the floor, up through the legs: all of these add a sensory experience to the activity, which in some ways can be mesmerizing, and startling.

#### **Perceptivity:**

As each small drum group plays, the observer has background knowledge of echo, call-and-response, and question-and-answer. Not knowing what the group has created, the listener can listen to the overall composition. Listening at a deeper level of understanding, the listener can then pick out the echoes or call-and-response that the group may use, listening for subtle qualities.

#### **Active Engagement:**

There is no holding back of engagement any time drums are involved in the classroom. Drums speak to many cultures, which is why I use them throughout my curriculum. Not only are the students involved in the lesson objective, but they are also subconsciously exploring the skills of focus, matching, listening, watching, respecting and teamwork.

#### **Time Line:**

Two 45-minute classes.

#### **Materials:**

Tubanos

#### **Activities:**

Working in small groups, the following procedure will occur:

- Students sit in circle.
- Student #1 plays a 4-beat rhythm and repeats as an ostinato.
- Student #2 plays a 4-beat rhythm that complements the rhythm of student #1.
- Student #3 plays a 4-beat rhythm that complements the rhythm of students #1 & 2.
- Student #4 plays a 4-beat rhythm that complements the rhythm of students #1, 2 & 3.
- Student #1 stops playing.
- Student #2 stops playing.

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- Student #3 stops playing.
- Student #4 stops playing.

#### **Adaptations:**

Small-group adaptations include:

- A different student becomes the first to start and exit.
- Inclusion of small instruments (cowbell, gangokui, shekere).
- Body percussion only (snapping, clapping, patting).
- Create word patterns for drumming patterns:
  1. Happy Birthday, Happy Birthday.
  2. Low, high, low.
  3. What's your name?
- Use word patterns only.

Large-group adaptations include:

- Entire class sits in a large circle.
- The pattern of entering and exiting continues with students #1, 2, 3 & 4.
- When student #1 stops playing, student #5 plays a 4-beat rhythm that complements the rhythm of students # 2, 3 & 4.
- Student #2 stops playing, student #6 plays a 4-beat rhythm that complements the rhythm of students #3, 4 & 5.
- This pattern of entering and exiting continues around the circle.

#### **Evaluation:**

Students will demonstrate an understanding of rhythm complements by:

1. Incorporating the *Helpful Hints for Rhythm Complements*.
2. Play own rhythm accurately as an ostinato.
3. Maintain his/her rhythm as other students enter and exit the music.