



*“Hoe Down”
from Rodeo*

Aaron Copland

Boosey & Hawkes publishing

10th Grade Orchestra-level 5

Carolyn Kaufman Teaching Guide

“Hoe Down” Unit

Goals:

- Students will demonstrate understanding of balance in Aaron Copland’s “Hoe Down” through proper dynamics, performance skills, texture, and listening. (2,5,6)
- Students will connect the history of “Bonaparte’s Retreat” and “McCloud’s Reel” with what was happening in America at the time that *Rodeo* was written. (5,6,7,9)
- Students will play Aaron Copland’s “Hoe Down” from *Rodeo* with proper dynamics. (2,5)
- Students will use the texture of “Hoe Down” to justify dynamic decisions. (2,5,6,7)
- Students will connect the melodic line of “Hoe Down” with *Irregular Bands of Color*, a piece of artwork by Sol LeWitt. (5,6,7,8)
- Students will create dances to depict the different styles of “Hoe Down”. (6,7,8)

National Standards:

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
5. Reading and notating music.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performance.
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

Score Analysis

Composer:

Aaron Copland was born in Brooklyn on November 14, 1900 and was the youngest of five children. His parents were Jewish immigrants from Lithuania. He began studying piano with his sister, but soon desired to take lessons from a professional, eventually studying with Rubin Goldmark. He went on to study composition and piano, even studying in France under Nadia Boulanger for some time. After returning to America in the 1920s, he began to incorporate jazz and folk sounds in order to make his music sound more “American”. He won a Pulitzer Prize for his composition *Appalachian Spring*. Two years before this, in 1942, he composed the score for the ballet *Rodeo*, where “Hoe Down” is the final piece.

Melodic:

The melody that is presented at square 5 is based on “Bonaparte’s Retreat”, which is a traditional fiddle tune. Everything that leads up to this point is a lot of fast chromatic triplets, and staccato eighth notes. At square 11 the second melody is presented, which is based on “McCloud’s Reel”, another American folk tune. This is introduced by the violas, and then taken over by the violins. Then the original melody returns at square 16. Throughout this piece, each section but the basses play in a higher range than usual. This could pose some potential issues. The students will need to think about fiddle tunes while performing and rehearsing this piece.

Harmonic:

This piece stays in D major throughout. The violas, cellos, and second violins are often playing divisi intervals of fourths and fifths.

Rhythmic:

During the introduction, there is a random 3/4 measure among the 2/4 that the students will need to be made aware of. Counting and practicing going between the two meters will need to happen. There are a lot of fast triplet slurs in almost all of the parts that will need to be practiced slowly as well. There is almost always a grace note triplet before each phrase of triplets. Practicing without these grace notes for a while will help the students understand the important line. The lower voices have a lot of syncopation that will need to be isolated and worked on. Aside from these, there is a lot of fast 16th note runs. They are not always stepwise, so these sections will need to be worked on as well.

Form:

This piece is in an ABA form, with a lengthy introduction. The intro goes from the beginning to square 5. From here is where the “Bonaparte’s Retreat” sounding melody is introduced, starting the A section. Square 11 is the beginning of the B section, which sounds like the “McCloud’s Reel” melody. In this section, there is a solo that is passed between the first violin and viola from square 12 to square 13. The A section is brought back at square 16 and goes to the end of the piece.

Texture:

The piece is mostly full throughout, with a couple measures here and there with a smaller group playing. Even in the solo section at square 12, there are a couple sections that act as the accompaniment. At these sections, it is important for the students to not play over the soloist.

Historical/ Cultural:

The melodies of “Bonaparte’s Retreat” and “McCloud’s Reel” offer an opportunity to explore why Copland would use them.

“Bonaparte’s Retreat” is of Irish origin, probably used in ballads about Napoleon’s exile and defeat. In America, this piece was used as a military march during the Civil War. This and “McCloud’s Reel” were both well-known fiddle tunes at this time.

Lessons

Lesson 1: Students will create characters and dances for each style section of “Hoe Down” by Aaron Copland.

1. Start this lesson by playing a recording of “Hoe Down” and having students raise their hands whenever they hear a style change.
2. Stop the recording and talk about the style they just heard, coming up with a character for that section.
3. Repeat until the whole piece is done and there are different characters for each section.
4. Next talk about the kinds of dances that one would dance if they were at a hoedown. Show videos.
 - a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fG2VPBjk1iw>
 - b. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NPwGQZ1M8VE>
5. Discuss the ballet *Rodeo*- specifically what is happening during “Hoe Down”
 - a. She has been looked down on because she is competing in rodeos, then she shows up looking all pretty, and all of the guys want to dance with her. She turns them down and dances with the only guy who was always nice to her.
6. Take each section, think about the character that they assigned each part, and create a dance. Bring in a dance instructor or physical education teacher to aid in the choreography if necessary.
7. Play the recording and have them perform their dances. Watch that each section is actually different.

Lesson 2: Students will create a form roadmap for “Hoe Down”.

Students will compare the line of “Hoe Down” to the piece of art *Irregular Bands of Color* by Sol LeWitt.

1. Separate the class into sections, either by instrument, or into groups with a mix of students from each section.
2. Have each group create a roadmap for the piece, thinking about the melodic line, and the form. Break up the roadmap into ABA
3. The class will vote on the best one. Make it a “living” roadmap that is able to change.

4. Have a way to project the music onto a board or something. Take each section and project it. Connect the note heads to show the line
5. Show the class *Irregular bands of Color* by Sol LeWitt- ask them to talk in their groups and compare the art to the line of the piece.
6. Play through the sections paying attention to the line. Isolate sections if necessary.

Lesson 3: Students will listen to “Bonaparte’s Retreat”, “McCloud’s Reel”, and “Galop” and compare and contrast them to “Hoe Down”.

1. Listen to “Bonaparte’s Retreat” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yeQucos9-M>)
2. Compare to “Hoe Down”
3. Repeat with “McCloud’s Reel” (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bnu2nfbR_Ug) and “Galop” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wGYdeXRCD1c>)

Lesson 4: Students will write a newspaper article depicting the history behind “Hoe Down” and Rodeo and what was happening in history at the time it was written.

1. Give the students a brief history at the beginning of the rehearsal process. Use <http://www.biography.com/people/aaron-copland-9256998#synopsis> as a starting point.
2. Let students know that one of the articles will be given out as program notes during the concert.
3. Students will be doing research on their own in order to put together an article that includes the story and history behind *Rodeo* and “Hoe Down”, information on what was happening in history at this time, and why Copland would include the two folk tunes into the piece.
4. The students will need to have a minimum of 3 sited sources for this project.
5. This will be graded with a rubric

Lesson 5: Students will identify the important line at various points of the piece, and demonstrate their knowledge through multiple avenues. (this will be spread out over many days)

1. Go through the piece and identify the important line at various points. Play a section, either through a sound system or as a class, and have the students discuss what they believe to be the important line. Which section is playing that line?
2. After listening to each section, instruct the sections to stand when they are playing the important line.
3. Give each instrumental section a number (1st violins-1, 2nd violin- 2, etc.)
4. Instruct the first half of each section to play, the other half listen for the important line. Have the listening students hold up the number of the section with the important line. Switch between which half of the class is playing. Play through in a random order, not straight through the piece.

5. Start at the beginning, and instruct that only the important line is going to play, accompaniment drops out. Play through a section at a time, listening for anyone who continues to play even when they shouldn't. Keep note of these sections and repeat if necessary.

Assessments

1. For the dances, there will be mostly observations for the assessment. I will be making sure that all students change styles at the correct times
2. Each group will turn in a form roadmap
 - a. Checklist:
 - i. Did they split the roadmap into ABA?
 - ii. Did they create some kind of roadmap that follows the form and melodic line of "Hoe Down"?
3. The history of the piece project will contain a rubric.

	0	1	2
Creativity	Student regurgitates information. Does not put a personal spin on the article	Students add a little individuality to the article. Has more of a history paper feel than an article.	Student writes with enthusiasm like something they would find in an actual newspaper. Makes their article unique
History of Rodeo and "Hoe Down"	Did not include the history of either aspect of the ballet.	Has little information about both aspects.	Thorough history of both aspects of the ballet.
General History at the time	Does not include.	Has little information, vague	Thorough information of the history at this time.
Why he included folk tunes	Does not include.	Gives some ideas, no research	Gives ideas and research to support
Sources	No sources	Less than 3 sources	3 or more sources
Grammar	Many grammatical mistakes. Difficult to understand	Some grammatical mistakes, but understandable	Little to no grammatical mistakes, easy to read.

4. During the identification of the important line, the students will be asked to raise their hands and give their opinions on what the important line is. During this time, they will be asked to give their reasoning behind their thoughts. I will be watching and listening for if they can explain their musical opinions.
5. Stand, numbers, melody only playing- observations. Watching for students who are either looking around for help, or playing when they are not supposed to.

Warm-ups

1. Dynamic warm up
 - a. Playing through a D Major scale, making sure that the students are following me and playing the correct dynamics. Do subito pianos and fortes to mimic the sudden dynamic changes in "Hoe Down"
2. style warm ups with the melody from "Hoe Down"
 - a. use one of the main melodies from the piece (square 5 for example)
 - b. give them a style to play the melody in, and listen for that style
 - c. Repeat with multiple different styles.
 - d. I would do this warm up before the style dance lesson.
3. scale in 16th notes
 - a. D major scale, using 16th notes like at square 8 of the piece. Have them start with 8 16th notes per note, then 4, then 2, then 1.
 - b. The first couple times you try this warm up, do it at a manageable tempo, then speed it up as they get more comfortable with it. This will make them feel better about the faster passages in the piece.
4. scale staccato 16ths (2 before 5)
 - a. D major scale with the 16th note rhythm like in the measure 2 before square 5.
 - b. Do a measure of each note, then two notes per measure.
 - c. Really focus on the rests between each set of 16ths. In the piece, the basses have eighth notes on 1 and 3, while the violins have the 16ths on 2 and 4. The violins will need to be able to hear the basses to stay on beat, so the rests are important.
5. scale in syncopation (measure 1-3)
 - a. The first three measures of the piece contain syncopation for the cellos and bass.
 - b. Play this rhythm with a D major scale

- c. Though the 1st violins never get the exact rhythm, they still have accents to go along with it. Make sure that the students are giving each note a little bit of emphasis.
6. Play a D major scale in a round, balance and bringing out the entrance of each section.

Resources

Soul of Music Teachers Guide:

<https://www.atlantasymphony.org/aso/asoassets/downloadcenter/Soul%20of%20Music%20Teachers%20Guide.pdf> pages 10-11 used for score analysis and lesson involving Sol Lewitt's artwork.

Aaron Copland biography:

<http://www.biography.com/people/aaron-copland-9256998#synopsis>

Video for Bonaparte's Retreat: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yeQucos9-M>

Video for McCloud's Reel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bnu2nfbR_Ug

Video for Galop by Kabalevsky: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wGYdeXRCD1c>

Glossary:

Roadmap: In this instance, I am referring to something that the students will draw that will show the form of the piece. We are also using this for the melodic line, so it will almost have the look of a heart-beat. Students will be able to depict this journey however they want, whether it is like a treasure map, or just lines following the melody and form.

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Things to think about:

- We will be looking at the line of the piece in comparison to visual arts. Be thinking about the line of the piece throughout this rehearsal process
- We will be doing a lot of work with style as well. Creating dances and comparing the style of this piece to the style of other folk tunes.

Harmonic:

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Rhythmic:

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Things to think about:

- We will be doing a lot of slow work at the beginning, but this is just to make sure that you get the rhythms down before speeding it up. Don’t worry, it won’t go that slow forever!

Form:

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Practice Tips:

- Violins, violas, and cellos: get more comfortable in your higher ranges by playing three octave scales. Also, play simple melodies an octave or two higher.
 - Violas and cellos: there are a couple points in this piece where you change clefs. Isolate the transitions for these sections and practice getting comfortable reading in the new clef.
- Practice your scales in staccato, marcato, and with the syncopation from the beginning of the piece. Accent each note to bring out the syncopation.
- Play around with the styles of the different sections of this piece, we will be talking about this more in class, but come up with some of your own ideas to present to the class.

Assignments and Assessments:

- Most of the assessment that will be happening for this piece will be visual. I will be watching and listening to make sure that you are understanding and playing the piece correctly.
- There will be a newspaper article project that you all will complete, which I will use a given rubric to grade. More information regarding this project will be given out later.

Glossary:

Staccato: with each sound or note sharply detached or separated from the others. In other words, bouncy, with a separation between each note.

Marcato: this means that there will be a slight emphasis to the beginning of the note, not as sharp as an accent, but slightly leaning into it.

Syncopation: a rhythm that is displaced so that the down beat is not always the strong beat.