



Subject: Music

Grade Level: Middle School

DI Strategy: Compacting

Music - Chords on the Guitar Compacting Lesson

I used compacting in the final unit which focused on playing chords on the guitar. The overall structure was similar to guided reading groups at the elementary level but provided some choice for students based on interest. In this unit, students had the opportunity to work at their own pace progressing.

I decided to implement the compacting strategy to differentiate for students who are naturally skilled at playing the guitar or who have had private lessons. As a formative assessment, I listened to all students play a level 1 song. From this performance, I determined which students needed to begin learning level 1 songs, and which students could skip levels 1 and or 2, and move right into the level at their correct level of difficulty. This formative assessment was not graded.

At some of the levels, students could select the song they wanted to learn and perform. For example, in level 1, both the songs Hound Dog and Love Me Do contain the chords and rhythmic element I wanted them to learn for that level. The students naturally gravitated towards one style or another as their individual tastes dictated; allowing them to choose the song that fit them better assessed their knowledge in an efficient manner.

At certain levels, I restricted their choices to make sure all students were still on the same page regarding certain chords and rhythmic styles. For example, when students started playing basic strumming patterns, a divide came up between students that are naturally capable of the skill and those that need to spend some additional practice time to become proficient. By limiting the song choices down to one, the song "Clocks" by English band Coldplay, I made sure all students understood this rhythmic concept before moving on to their own choices again.



Level	New Chords	Rhythmic Elements	Song(s)
1	D, A, E	4 down strums per bar	Hound Dog Love Me Do
2		Split Measures	Bye, Bye, Love Twist and Shout
3	Dm, Am, Em		St. James Infirmary Blues
4		Basic Strumming Patterns	Clocks
5	G, C		Mad World ...Baby One More Time
6		Ghost Strums	Good Riddance Brown Eyed Girl
7	B7, G7, C7		I Want to Hold Your Hand
8		Split Bass	Folsom Prison Blues