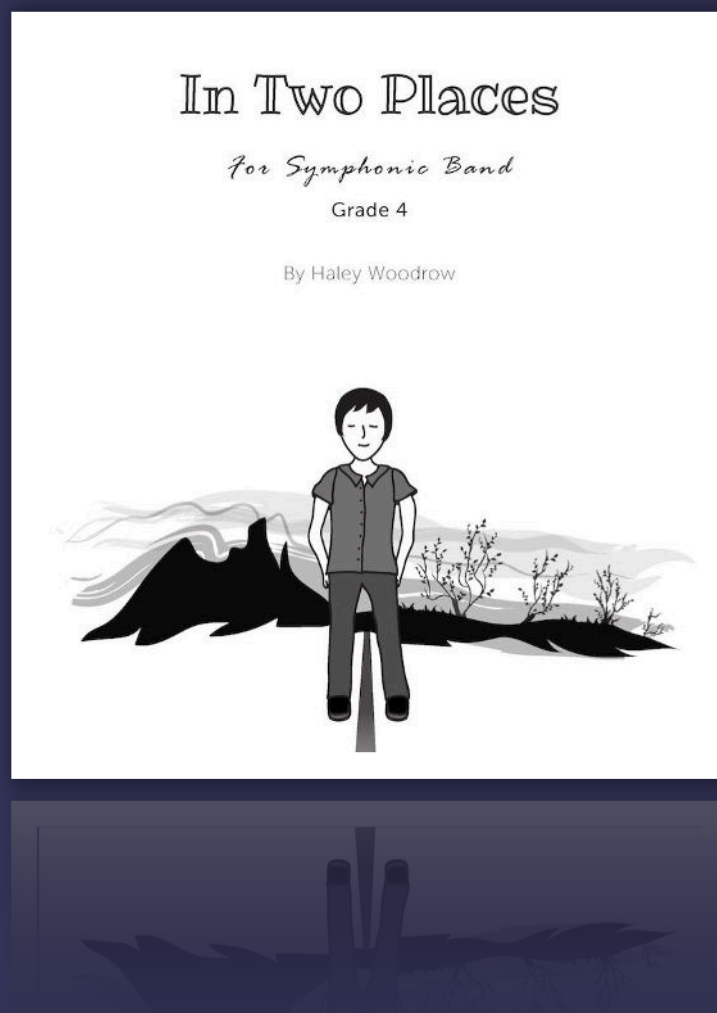


CREATING COMPOSERS CLINIC

# Musical Storytelling

Form, Orchestration and Ensemble Balance with *In Two Places*



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# “Musical Storytelling” Lesson Plan

**Outcome:** To teach the structural functions of music composition (intro, exposition, development, transition, secondary subject, synthesis and closure). The vocabulary words “Form” and “Orchestration” will be taught. Students will learn to perceive pacing, structure and the storytelling aspect of music, as well as become more aware of how compositional choices affects listeners. The importance of reflecting the character of the work as a performer will be emphasized. Other outcomes include increased familiarity with ranges and orchestrational considerations, and a hands-on approach to assigning melody and balancing the ensemble for performance.

## Lesson Plan:

### Form + Storytelling

1. Conduct the “Ferrandino method” of teaching structural function. Begin with the first line of a well-known story. (once upon a time, there were three little pigs...) Explain to the students how the opening idea includes both an introduction and a subject.
2. Have the students each write down the next event in the story (one sentence). Take a vote on which will be used in the collaborative story. Ask how this event relates to the opening line. (i.e, “the pigs went into the forest” – expands on the idea and therefore is development)
3. Have them write a third line, etc. until another character is introduced. (i.e, “suddenly, a wolf appeared” – another character, which is a secondary conflicting theme) The opportunity may arise to teach about transition, depending on the responses.
4. Ask for the next line. Explain transition if it has not appeared yet.
5. Ask for a concluding line.
6. \*Either have band warm-up and play segments of *In Two Places*, or play recording of *In Two Places*, stopping at the end of each section and asking what structural function has occurred.

### Orchestration + Ensemble Balance

1. If they have not already done so, have the band warm-up.
2. Have the students pull out the *In Two Places* – Melodies hand-out and play through the melody at m.5
3. Have students pull out the *In Two Places* – Range Guide hand-out. Discuss the six options for the melody as it is written. Have the written oboe/clarinet/marimba trio play through the melody.
4. Try different combinations of instruments on the melody.
5. Weigh the options, and vote on the combination to use for the customization. Note how octaves change balance and perception.
6. At m. 42, have the clarinets play, line a,b and c. Have all the line a’s play – ask who is at the same pitch, who is down an octave, etc. Work on balancing by listening to the lowest, more predominant voice.
7. Repeat with line b and c, then play all parts together.

### Workshop the piece (if time allows)

1. Based on the customizations, make notes of any needed adjustments to any other parts if necessary.
2. Rehearse the work possibly with customizations in place, and workshop the piece with the director.

# Overview

This 90 minute Creating Composers Clinic is designed to introduce the principles of composition to band students, as well as give them the opportunity to act as composers by customizing *In Two Places* for performance. Students will learn how to analyze and describe structural functions in music composition with vocabulary words such as exposition, form and closure. They will also learn to perceive pacing, structure and the storytelling aspect of music, as well as become more aware of how compositional choices affects listeners. Other outcomes include increased familiarity with ranges and orchestrational considerations, and a hands-on approach to assigning melody and balancing the ensemble for performance. In short, during the clinic, and post-workshop, students will:



## Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

This clinic includes training on the following parts of the Music TEKS:

- ✓ analyze musical forms in music selected for performance and listening
- ✓ analyze concepts of balance and blend using appropriate terminology
- ✓ student arranges melodic phrases
- ✓ student evaluates the quality and effectiveness of music
- ✓ exhibit informed concert etiquette as a performer

## About the Instructor

Haley Woodrow received her Bachelor's of Music in Jazz Studies from the University of Texas at Arlington and her Master's of Music Composition from Texas Christian University.

Haley's compositions have received awards from the National Band Association, the Texas Music Educators Association, the International Arcady Choral Composer Competition and the Noteflight Big Band Contest. She is published by Alfred, Hal Leonard, C.L. Barnhouse, Murphy Music Press and her own company, Woodrow Music.

Haley began her musical journey as a trumpet player, and is currently an active performer as well as a private lessons teacher. She serves as an Adjunct Instructor for Tarrant County and Weatherford Colleges in addition to her activity as a clinician, research blogger and entrepreneur.

**Required Director and Student Materials:**

The director will need a copy of the score to *In Two Places*. Students will need a copy of their part to *In Two Places*, as well as their copy of the melody handout, the range guide and a pencil. (All these materials are included as digital files in the cost of the clinic.) \*Note: after the clinic takes place, I will customize the music and resend the score and parts for performance.

**Required and Optional Teaching Tools:**

I will need a board to write on or a projector and projector screen. If using the projector, I have included the PowerPoint Presentation to be displayed. Alternatively, I have an adapter for my MacBook Pro that should work with your VGA or HDMI cables. I will need a playback device if you prefer me to play the recording in step 6 in the first part of the clinic. If a keyboard or piano is accessible I would like to have it available.

# Creating Composers Clinic – “Musical Storytelling” Evaluation

Thank you for allowing me to work with your students on *In Two Places* and for the opportunity to talk about composition. Please let me know what parts of the clinic went well, and offer any suggestions for improvement!

1. How did you feel the pacing of the clinic was?
2. What was the most valuable part of the clinic to you?
3. Any suggestions for improvement?
4. Are there any future clinic topics or compositions you might like to see offered?
5. Considering the customization may require you to make another set of parts for your band, do you feel it's valuable enough to warrant the time and cost?
6. One of my hopes for the outcome of the clinic is that a system of language is introduced for structural functions (exposition, development, transition, etc.) that can be used while discussing subsequent performance works. If an online resource for score study utilizing these terms was applied and made available publicly, would you use it for personal and/or classroom use? If so, what compositions (or type of compositions) would be of the most interest?

## Post-Workshop Suggestions

One post-workshop element is already built in to the clinic – I will send the customized version of *In Two Places* to you! This will allow your students to give a truly unique performance of the work.

As a classroom activity, analyze another work in terms of structural function, using vocabulary words such as exposition, development, transition, secondary idea, synthesis and closure. Ask the students what type of story the composer is trying to tell. Discuss the emotional aspect of how the audience may react. Emphasize the importance of reflecting the mood of the work with the performers' non-verbal gestures and facial expressions.

On a personal note, I grew up in Texas band programs and had a wonderful experience, especially with performance. However, I did not have the opportunity to compose and I am creating these clinics to do my part in improving the educational system that I have benefitted so much from. My hope is to peak the interest of students who might have a desire to compose. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if I can assist in any way with supporting you in creating composition opportunities for your students. One resource is the Parent Teacher's Association "Reflections" arts competition, which is hosted annually on a regional, state and national level and has a music composition category. A video and blog about my work helping a group of eighth grade students with their compositional activities at Hillwood Middle School in Keller, TX can be found here:

<https://haleywoodrow.com/2017/10/01/creatingcomposersclinic/>