Jazz Ensemble Leadership Rotation | Teacher Guide

Louisiana Orff Schulwerk Music Lab • Lesson 038 • Grades 6–8 • ensemble leadership • 3–5 sessions

Essential inquiry

How can listening, movement and improvisation transform our understanding of collective improvisation in jazz ensembles?

Cultural or technical context

collective improvisation in jazz ensembles. Orff Schulwerk is a process-centered approach. Use credited recordings and public-context sources. Avoid reproducing sacred, ceremonial or copyrighted music without permission; activities below compose new material.

Learning targets

Students will demonstrate ensemble leadership; research the relevant context; create an original artifact or composition; justify at least one change after critique.

Materials and preparation

Voice, movement space, body percussion, classroom percussion, optional barred instruments, visual cue cards, recording/playback with permission.

Differentiation

Students investigate maker and context, test three options, justify their design choices, and document one revision.

Extension beyond Grade 12

Advanced learners may deepen their research, technique and documentation while keeping the same core inquiry.

Ten-step teaching sequence

01. Listen to or discuss a short, appropriately licensed Louisiana example connected with collective improvisation in jazz ensembles; identify whose music it is.
02. Investigate the people, location, social setting, and musical roles involved in collective improvisation in jazz ensembles.
03. Practice ensemble leadership: teacher models beat, voice, movement and a simple instrument option, then students echo.
04. Improvise three original speech, body-percussion or melodic responses that explore ensemble leadership.
05. Choose a group arrangement and decide who begins, leads, changes and ends.
06. Switch student-led cues for solos accompaniment and silence; rehearse with movement, voice and available instruments.
07. Listen as an ensemble: name one precise musical strength and one question, without ranking cultural authenticity.
08. Revise a musical phrase, balance, cue or movement based on recorded feedback.
09. Perform an original 30–90 second arrangement and verbally credit the researched music context.
10. Reflect on how the music changed, the group decisions made, and what remains to investigate.

Discussion prompts

01. What evidence tells you something important about collective improvisation in jazz ensembles?
02. How does ensemble leadership change the meaning of the result?
03. Which source is being credited, and whose voice is missing?
04. What feedback prompted a visible or audible revision?

Formative assessment

At entry: one baseline observation. During: two skill trials and a peer critique. Exit: final result, revision evidence and source credit.

Safety and accessibility

Provide accessible participation roles, sensory accommodations and clear consent for any recordings or images.

Reference and standards note

https://aosa.org/about-aosa/the-orff-schulwerk-approach/
https://folkways.si.edu/lesson/cajun-and-creole-culture/food-dance-and-music
Align locally with current grade-level arts standards; do not treat this resource as a verified Louisiana standards crosswalk.

RIGHTS & CLASSROOM USE

Studio Fieldnotes | Educational Resource License

Copyright (c) 2026 Killian Williams-Morantine, to the extent legally owned and copyrightable. Other contributors and rights holders retain their rights.

PERMITTED: An individual educator may download, print, and adapt this resource for noncommercial instruction in their own classroom or program, including private distribution to enrolled students and caregivers.
Keep credit, this notice, and source notes with the material.

NOT INCLUDED: Resale, paid redistribution, reposting full resources to **public repositories, presenting this work as your own, or institutional** bulk licensing without separate written authorization.

EXCEPTIONS: This notice does not limit fair use or other rights under law. **Facts, ideas, cultural traditions, and third-party materials are not** claimed as exclusive property. Source media may have separate rights.

VERIFY: Teachers must check local standards, safety, accessibility, **cultural accuracy, and all music or image permissions before use.**

Full terms: killianwilliamsmorantine.com/rights-and-use.html
Image policy: killianwilliamsmorantine.com/image-credits-and-provenance.html
Permission requests: killianwilliamsmorantine.com/contact.html