

**MANCHESTER COLLEGE**  
**Department of Education**  
**Lesson by: Kaitlin Hughes**

**Lesson:** Major/Minor Lesson

**Approx. Length:** 30 minutes

**Age or Grade:** 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Academic Standards:**

4.1.1 Sing while maintaining good breath control, pitch, diction, tone quality, and posture

4.5.2 Identify and notate patterns from aural examples

4.6.3 Expand use of musical terms, instrument names, and styles, using word banks and other vocabulary activities

**Performance Objective:** Given a specific song, students must work as a group to decide if the song is in a major or minor mode.

**Assessment:** Students will be divided into groups of four or five and must work together to determine if certain songs are major or minor by raising their hand once they have discussed it and have an answer. Scores will be kept throughout the game on the board to determine a “winner” at the end of class.

**Advance Preparation by Teacher:**

1. Have YouTube videos or CDs ready to play given Major and Minor songs.
2. Have small pieces of colored paper ready to hand out to each student or have one sitting on or below their desk already.

**Procedure:**

**Step-by-Step:**

1. Warm –up by playing various major and minor chords on the piano and having the students guess which one you are playing by raising their hand.
2. Then have them sing major and minor arpeggios by singing do-me-sol-me-do (major triad) and do-may-sol-may-do (minor triad).
3. To begin the Halloween Season, play this game to express to the students the difference between major and minor scales and sounds.
4. Have YouTube videos and CDs ready to play for the students. (Just make sure ahead of time that you can negotiate anything on YouTube and then to CDs quickly and efficiently so there is no long “down” time between each song.) Divide the students into groups of 4 or 5 and have them space out in the room. An easy way to divide them up is to give out a colored piece of paper to each person. Each color is a different group. (This grouping technique worked very well.) Have each group go to a different area in the classroom.

5. Play a song from a YouTube video or CD and ask the groups to determine whether they are Major or Minor. Have a spokes person in each group and then have the students decide as a group what their answer is. Keep track of their correct points on the board for all to see.

(Gaming format sounds fun and engaging for students.)

Here are some examples of songs to use:

**Major:**

Waking up in Vegas by Katy Perry

Can't Buy Me Love

Love Never Fails by Brandon Heath

Jingle Bells

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

**Minor:**

Blue Skies

Christmas Time is Here

Everyday by Bon Jovi

Love Don't Cost a Thing by J. Lo

Ain't It Fun by Guns N'Roses

December Nights (purple - CD 21:15)

(Very good list of possible Major and minor songs – good to have these ready ahead of time BEFORE you are in front of students.)

Great lesson. Students learned important musical concepts.

-Rebecca Hill, Pettit Park Elementary Music Teacher