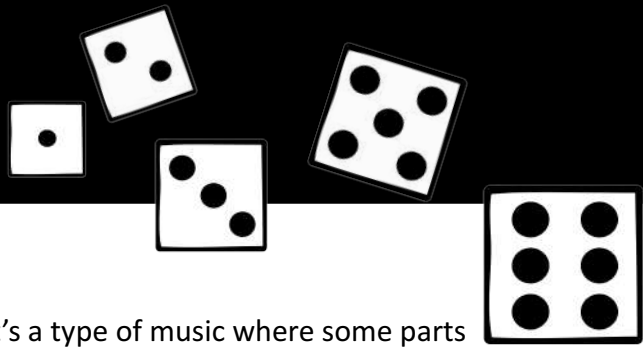


Aleatoric Music:



What is it?

Aleatoric music is a cool way of saying “chance” music. It’s a type of music where some parts of the music are left up to, well...chance! There are many different ways that a piece of music could contain elements of chance. For example, maybe the composer, (the person who wrote the music), will allow the performer to decide how long to play a certain note. Or, maybe the composer will allow the performer to decide what instrument to use to play the piece. Composers have been very creative with how they included “chance” into their compositions.

One composer who wrote aleatoric music was John Cage. He liked to call his music “indeterminate” music, which means that not all of it was determined (or decided) ahead of time. Some of it was decided by chance.

One last fact: The word “aleatoric” comes from the Latin word “alea.” Any guesses on what “alea” means in Latin...it means “die” as in the singular word for DICE! So “aleatoric” music is like rolling the dice and taking a chance!

Activity:

In this activity you will be creating a composition in the spirit of John Cage and all the other composers of aleatoric music by rolling a die to determine your piece. Follow the instructions on the next pages! There are **4 STEPS** total to complete.

Supplies:

Pencil, paper, dice*, & any instrument**

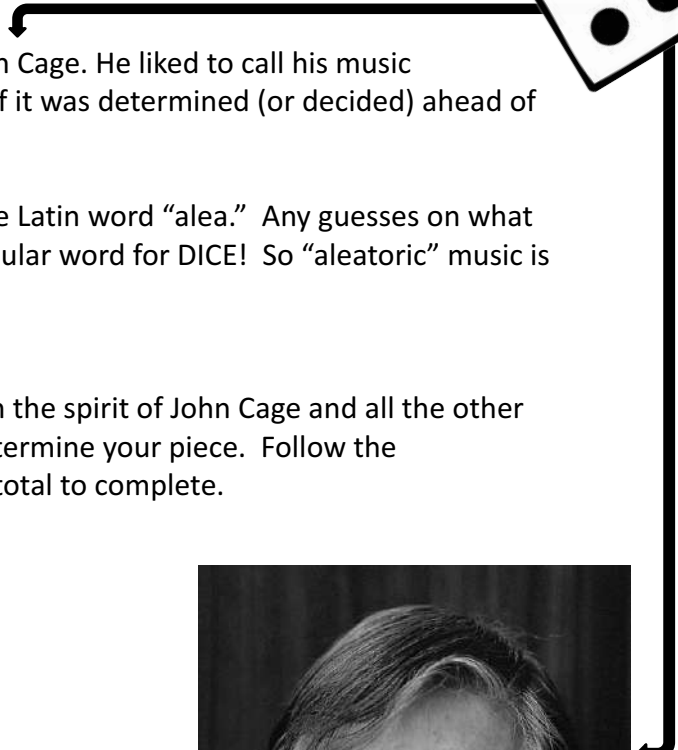
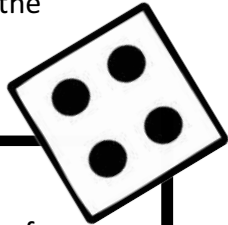
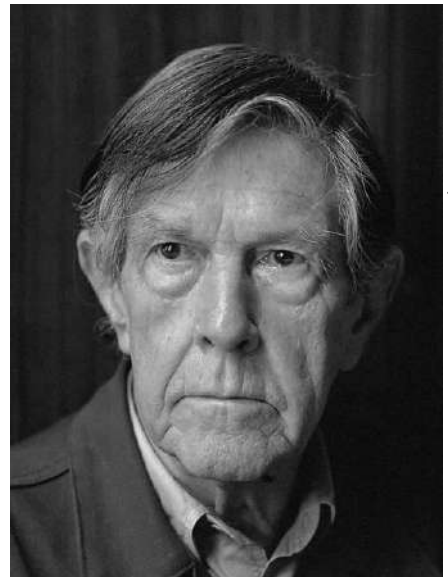
*if you don’t have dice at home then you could

Use this website for dice:


<https://eslkidsgames.com/classroom-dice>


OR cut up six slips of paper, number them 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, and then mix them up in a hat and draw them at random!


**your instrument can be ANYTHING! You can use your hands to clap, you can use two spoons to play on a pan, you can use a pencil on a table...any thing that can tap out a rhythm!




Step 1: Before we roll the die we need to decide what each roll is going to represent. We need to compose a measure of music for each of the die numbers below so that if we roll that number, we can use that measure in our music. You may use the following rhythms when you compose your measures:

Quarter note (1 sound on 1 beat) 

Pair of eighth notes (2 sounds *sharing* 1 beat) 

Four Sixteenth Notes (4 sounds *sharing* 1 beat) 


Quarter rest (1 beat of silence). 


Each measure will have four beats in it.


You can see below that I show each beat with a black line.


If you cannot print this page off, draw what you see below on a blank sheet of paper and then continue.


 | _____ |
1 2 3 4

 | _____ |
1 2 3 4

 | _____ |
1 2 3 4

 | _____ |
1 2 3 4

 | _____ |
1 2 3 4

 | _____ |
1 2 3 4

This is one measure, fill it up using quarter notes, pairs of eighth notes, a group of 16th notes, or a quarter rest! You're the composer, you get to decide what rhythms you want! Need an example? Flip to the last page to see mine.

Finished composing a measure of rhythm for each of the numbered dice? **Step number 2** is on the next page! We are almost ready to roll the die!

Step 2: Now that you have composed a measure of rhythm for each number on the die (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6) it's time to ROLL the die, ("die" is singular for "dice"). Below is an empty shell of a composition. It contains eight measures. You are going to roll the die eight times total. Every time you roll the die, find which measure you assigned to that number on the page before and write it below. This is how you are going to have a composition created by chance! It's OK if you roll the same number many times. It's OK if you don't roll a certain number at all. It's all part of the process of composing your aleatoric piece. So, you roll the die, reference that number of the page before this, and write in whatever rhythm you decided will go with that number. Time to roll that die!



All finished? Check: Did you roll the die eight times? Depending on what number you rolled, did you write that measure of rhythm into your composition above. Did you create an eight-measure long composition by rolling a die? Don't forget to give your composition a title!

Step 3: Perform your composition! Use whatever "instrument" you want. You can even just clap the rhythms.

Step 4: Share your work with me!

Send a photo of your composition to me on an educational platform such as Dojo, Remind, or school email

Or if applicable, drop off a paper copy of your composition when you drop off your packet to school
(Remember this it not mandatory! I'd just love to see/hear what you came up with!)

Instructions:

Step 1: Compose a measure of music for each of the die numbers below. You may use the following rhythms:

Quarter note (1 sound on 1 beat)


Pair of eighth notes (2 sounds *sharing* 1 beat)

Four Sixteenth Notes (4 sounds *sharing* 1 beat)

Quarter rest (1 beat of silence). Each measure will have four beats in it.


You can see that I show each beat with a black line. If you cannot print this page off, just write your 6 measures of rhythms on a blank sheet of paper. Draw little image of the die beside each measure.

Example!




1 2 3 4

Musical notation for a 1-dot die: four quarter notes, one on each beat.




1 2 3 4

Musical notation for a 2-dot die: two eighth notes on beat 1, four sixteenth notes on beat 2, quarter note on beat 3, quarter note on beat 4.




1 2 3 4

Musical notation for a 3-dot die: quarter rest on beat 1, quarter rest on beat 2, quarter rest on beat 3, quarter note on beat 4.




1 2 3 4

Musical notation for a 4-dot die: four sixteenth notes on beat 1, eighth notes on beat 2, four sixteenth notes on beat 3, eighth notes on beat 4.



1 2 3 4

Musical notation for a 5-dot die: eighth notes on beat 1, eighth notes on beat 2, eighth notes on beat 3, eighth notes on beat 4.



1 2 3 4

Musical notation for a 6-dot die: four sixteenth notes on beat 1, eighth notes on beat 2, eighth notes on beat 3, eighth notes on beat 4.

For when I roll a "1" on the die I decided I'll use quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, and quarter rest. But you can make up your own rhythm. As long as you fill up all four beats in each measure, it doesn't matter which rhythms you choose!

I've used an assortment of rhythms for the rest of the measures. Remember, fill up the entire measure, choosing any rhythm you want! Once you fill up a measure of rhythm for each side of the die, you're ready to roll! Now I'm going to pick up my die, turn to the next page, and see how my piece of music composes itself through "chance"!

Instructions:

Step 2: Now that you have composed a measure of rhythm for each number on the die (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6) it's time to ROLL the die. ("die" is singular for "dice"). Below is an empty shell of a composition. It contains eight measures. You are going to roll the die eight times total. Every time you roll the die, find which measure you assigned to that number and write it below. This is how you are going to have a composition created by chance! It's OK if you roll the same number many times. It's OK if you don't roll a certain number at all. So, you roll the die, reference that number of the page before this, and write in whatever rhythm you decided will go with that number. Time to roll that die!

Example!

Ok, let's imagine I first roll the die and it is a...3! I look back on my page of measures and see that when I roll a 3 I need to put in this measure of rhythm. I knew that by looking at the last page. Let's roll again!

Diagram illustrating the process of rolling a die and inserting a corresponding measure of rhythm into a composition. A die showing 3 dots is shown above a musical staff with a measure of rhythm (quarter note, quarter note, quarter note). A die showing 6 dots is shown above a musical staff with a measure of rhythm (quarter note, quarter note, quarter note).

Pretend that this time I rolled a...6! I look back on my page of measures and insert that measure here. Now, keep rolling the die until you fill up all of the blank measures on this page (you will roll the die eight times). Once you do that, your composition is complete!

Two rows of blank musical staves, each divided into eight measures, for composing a piece of music.

Step 3: Perform your composition you've created! Use whatever "instrument" you want. You can even just clap your eight measures of rhythm.

Step 4: Share your work with me! Here are ways you can share your work:

- Send a photo of your composition to me on Dojo, Remind, or my school email
- Send a video on Dojo of you performing your composition!
- Drop off your paper copy of your composition when you drop off your packet to school
(Remember this it not mandatory! I'd just love to see/hear what you came up with!)

Standards:

MU.3-5.2	Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (e.g., rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music for selected performances.
MU.3-5.3	Read and perform music using standard notation.
MU.3-5.14	Create rhythmic and melodic ideas based on varied music forms.
MU.3-5.16	Relate contextual influence (e.g., social, cultural, and historical) to music performances.
MU.6-8.7	Read rhythmic patterns in multiple meters (e.g., 2/4, 4/4, 3/4, and 6/8,)
MU.6-8.12	Compose a piece in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, or 6/8 meters.

Credit/Works Cited

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