



M·U·S·I·C

for

young
people

musicforagreatspace.org

MGS
Organ Festival #3
TRANSCRIPTION

High School Lesson

9-12 Lesson Plan: TRANSCRIBING MUSIC

Warm Up:

Transcription: The written or printed representation of something.

Transcribe Music: Actively listen to music, hear it in your head (audiate), and put it in writing

Example: Let's take a song that most of you have heard or sung before – “**Happy Birthday**” – and sing it together. A piano version is linked if you would like to use it, it is in the Key of F.

Guided Instruction:

Guide students through the process of transcribing Happy Birthday (in the key of F). Repeat the song as necessary in order to utilize the process listed below.

- Where's the beat? (Their body language will likely show you that they can *feel* it)
- What's the time signature? (That's right, 3/4 time, the pickup notes can make this a tricky question)
- Is “Happy Birthday” in a major or minor key? (Let's hope they know it's major...ha-ha!)
- Where's “*do*,” the root of the scale? (Usually at the end of the melody)
- What's the starting note? (That's right, it's NOT *do*, it's *sol*)



Watch the Organ Introduction

- You can access the video by clicking on the word “Introduction” above.

Famous Italian organist, composer and Benedictine nun, **Caterina Assandra**, whose motets were among the first of the Roman style to be published in Milan, was born into an affluent family, likely in Pavia. Assandra's musical education began in her childhood when she studied with private tutors hired by her father. Living in a time when music making was judiciously monitored, Assandra's musical education was justified as serving a religious purpose.

Her compositions were largely published between 1609 and 1616, and it is assumed that her duties as a nun took over after that point, which halted her composing career. Two of her motets were later re-published in German anthologies and, unlike many other nuns who wrote music at that time, her work was known beyond the boundaries of her home country.

Video explaining a choral motet by Assandra, Ave Verum Corpus.

- You can access the video by clicking on the word “Video” above.

Video Interview explaining a transcription of a choral motet by Assandra, Ave Verum Corpus, for the organ.

- You can access the video by clicking on the word “Interview” above.

Choral Version of Ave Verum Corpus: Audio Link

- You can access the audio version by clicking on the word “Link” above.

Ave Verum Corpus

- Caterina Assandra c. 1590–after 1618
- Transcribed from the Pelplin organ tablature by Marya Fancey
- Performed by Marya Fancey

Watch the Organ Performance of Ave Verum Corpus

- You can access the video by clicking on the word “Performance” above.

Follow-Up Activity: Transcribe your own melody

Materials Needed:

- **personal listening device**
- **headphones**
- **piano or instrument of choice ([digital keyboard link](#))**
- **staff paper or access free, online notation software**
 - staff paper is provided on the last page
 - [MuseScore](#)
 - [Noteflight](#)
 - [Finale Notepad](#)
 - [Flat](#)

Choose a Melody to Transcribe (audio links are provided below):

- **Lean on Me**
- **Havana**
- **Happy**
- **Mario Brothers Theme Song**
- **Choose your own *appropriate* option**
 - Your music, Ads, Theme Songs (Video Game, TV, or Movie)

Review the steps to transcribe a melody:

- Listen to your melody
- Hum and/or Sing your melody
 - Where's the beat?
 - What's the time signature?
- Listen to your melody again
- Hum and/or Sing your melody again
 - Is your melody in a major (happy sounding) or minor (sad sounding) key?
 - Where's "do," the root of the scale? (Usually at the end of the melody)
 - What's the starting note?
- Listen to your melody again
- Hum and/or Sing your melody again
 - Use your piano/instrument to determine "do", the key, and starting note.
 - *Example in C Major*

The image shows a musical staff with two systems of notes. The top system is in treble clef and the bottom system is in bass clef. Above the top staff, the solfege syllables are: do re mi fa sol la ti do ti la sol fa mi re do. Below the top staff, the scale degrees are: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 1 7 6 5 4 3 2 1. The notes are: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. The bottom staff shows the same notes an octave lower: C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3.

- Listen to your melody again – FOCUS ON PITCH
- Hum and/or Sing your melody again
 - Use your piano/instrument to find the pitches used in the melody
 - Jot down your results
- Listen to your melody again – FOCUS ON RHYTHM
- Hum and/or Sing your melody again
 - Speak, clap, and/or count the melody to identify the rhythms used
 - Jot down your results
 - These are common rhythmic patterns, but they can become more complex depending on your melody.

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff contains four rhythmic patterns labeled 1 through 4. The bottom staff contains four rhythmic patterns labeled 5 through 8. Each pattern is shown on a single staff with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. Pattern 1: quarter note, quarter rest. Pattern 2: eighth note, eighth note, quarter rest. Pattern 3: eighth note, eighth note, eighth note, eighth note, quarter rest. Pattern 4: eighth note, eighth note, quarter note, quarter rest. Pattern 5: eighth note, eighth note, quarter note, quarter rest. Pattern 6: quarter note, eighth note, quarter rest. Pattern 7: eighth note, quarter note, quarter rest. Pattern 8: eighth note, eighth note, quarter note, quarter rest.

- Listen to your melody again
- Hum and/or Sing your melody again
 - Start matching your pitches and rhythmic patterns together on a music staff.

