

Explore: The Power of a Soundtrack

Watch the scene from *The Lion King* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ecYggLml89c>) with the original music by Hans Zimmer and reimagined by other composers. Invite students to become “Cinematic Sound Explorers,” traveling across genres and exploring emotions through music. Each group will take on the role of musical directors, film critics, and designers to examine how music transforms the meaning of a scene.

Create Your Own Musical Version

- Divide students into small groups. Assign each group a musical genre or let them choose (e.g., jazz, horror, romantic, pop, Baroque).
- Acting as the new composers for a scene, each group writes a brief “composer’s note” explaining how they would rescore it. Their note should describe the intended instrumentation, mood, tempo, and how the new music would influence the scene’s narrative.
- Afterward, each group creates or improvises a short musical excerpt that reflects their revised score.
- Groups present their “Composer’s Cut” to the class.
- Discuss: “Which version changed the story the most? Why?”

Music Critics in Training

- Ask students to imagine they are music critics for a film magazine reviewing the re-scored *Lion King* scene.
- Working in pairs, students write a short review using prompts like:
 - “Which version worked best and why?”
 - “Would you recommend this version to the composer?”
- Have students read their reviews aloud or post them in a classroom gallery walk. Encourage constructive feedback and peer reflections.

Movie Poster Remix Design Project

- Have students design a movie poster for *The Lion King* scene as if it were a film in the genre of the soundtrack they heard (horror, sci-fi, comedy, etc.).
- Posters should include: a new title, tagline, mood-driven color palette, main image or drawing, and a short critic quote based on the soundtrack mood.
- Display posters gallery-style. Invite students to walk around and “vote” for the version they’d want to see.
- Discuss: “How did the music influence your visual design?”

For further exploration of storytelling, emotion, and compositional technique in music, see [“Episode 8: Chee-Hwa Tan, Composer, Pianist, and Teacher”](#) with Alejandro Cremaschi on the *Piano Inspires Podcast*.