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| Strand:  | Music                                     |
| Level:   | Grade 6                                   |
| Content: | 45 minute broadcast + hands-on activities |

## LIVE Arts: Francophone Music with Alexis Normand

There is music being made in French in Saskatchewan! Yes indeed! Fransaskoise singer-songwriter, Alexis Normand, will share her experience. Students will also discover the basics of songwriting through a collaborative creation.

Please see page 2 for **Teacher Guided Pre- or Post-Broadcast Activity** and pages 5-6 for a **Teacher-Guided Post-Broadcast Activity**. These activities will give students the opportunity to prepare for the broadcast and apply what they have learned during the broadcast.

### About the Artist

Fransaskoise artist Alexis Normand is an accomplished singer-songwriter whose soulful voice and jazz-folk melodies recall the soft prairie wind and the enchanting glow of the living and skies. Among other accolades, she and her debut album *Mirador* were recognized with several nominations in 2013 including one at the Canadian Folk Music Awards, the Western Canadian Music Awards and the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan's Arts Award.

### Curriculum Aims & Goals

#### **Creative/Productive:**

Students will learn how Alexis writes songs and create their own lyrics.

#### **Critical/Responsive:**

Students will learn to identify what ideas and emotions are being communicated in a song.

#### **Cultural/Historical:**

Students will learn about Francophone music in Saskatchewan.

**Curriculum Outcomes:** [www.curriculum.gov.sk.ca](http://www.curriculum.gov.sk.ca)

#### **CP6.8**

**Investigate and manipulate elements of music and principles of composition.**

## Teacher-Guided Pre-Broadcast or Post-Broadcast Activity

### **ACTIVE LISTENING: 10-15 minutes**

**Synopsis:** Songs communicate many things in many ways! This exercise encourages students to explore what they hear, imagine and feel when they listen to music. Ask students to focus mostly on the sounds they hear rather than the lyrics. For groups who may have some comprehension of French, we have included the lyrics to two of the songs at the end of the activity.

**STEP 1:** Distribute the Hear-Imagine & Feel Chart to students. Explain that music can communicate many different things. Sometimes ideas, emotions and images can be felt through the music, melody and arrangement of a song. While lyrics can be helpful to convey those ideas, the point of this exercise is to listen beyond the lyrics. Facilitate a discussion where students try to come up with examples of things they can hear, imagine or feel when they listen to music. Here are a few examples you may also want to bring up:

#### **HEAR:**

- Specific instruments (guitar, piano, voice, drums, etc.)
- Emotions (examples: a loud voice may communicate anger or rage)

#### **IMAGINE:**

- The music can often spark one's imagination. For example, when a flute plays notes that flutter up and down, it may make a person think of a butterfly or a bird's flight.
- If students understand or recognize any of the words, ask if the lyrics describe specific visuals ("And the green grass grows all around all around and the green grass grows all around!"). Lyrics for two songs are found at the end of the activity should you wish to consult them.

#### **FEEL:**

- Emotions: panic, joy, ease, sadness, peace, calm, etc.

### **Materials and resources for pre-broadcast activity**

- Pen/ pencil, eraser for each student

- **Active Listening Chart:** one per student. (Available under the "Resources" tab at <http://www.liveartsaskatchewan.com/programs/alexis/>)

- Computer or electronic device, speakers, and access to the internet to stream songs.

Song links are:

- Mètre de mon être (Damien Robitaille):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPEOEHKnAJU>

- FOLK: Mélodie

(Vaero) <http://vaero.bandcamp.com/track/m-lodie>

- JAZZ-FOLK: Quand il pleut (Alexis Normand) :

<https://alexisnormand.bandcamp.com/track/quand-il-pleut>

- INDIE-ROCK: Collage (Indigo Joseph)

<https://indigojoseph.bandcamp.com/track/la-balance>

- RAP: Tu m'auras pas (Shawn Jobin) <https://shawnjobin.bandcamp.com/>

- TRANS-ROCK: Le vrai sort (Mario Lepage) <http://mariolepage.bandcamp.com/releases>




Note: It remains the responsibility of educators to preview and select materials that best meet the needs of their students, school, and community. Educators should choose resources in accordance with their school division's learning resources selection policy.

- Desires: the urge to dance, the urge to stop listening, take a nap, etc.

**STEP 2:**

Choose one of the following Fransaskois songs in the “Resources” box on page 2 and play it for the students. While listening, ask students to complete their chart individually. Students may write words, draw pictures/sketches, etc. The idea is that the student begins to reflect on what he/she interprets when listening to a song. ***There is no wrong answer!***

\*\*\*Active Listening Charts are available under the “Resources” tab at <http://www.liveartsaskatchewan.com/programs/alexis/>

| What I Hear  | What I Imagine  | What I Feel  |
|---|--|---|
|   |  |   |

**STEP 3:** Share! Ask students to share their answers/experiences. Encourage students to analyze WHY they react a certain way to specific music/ sounds. Follow up each comment or contribution by asking the student “How did the musician make you feel that?”  
 \*It may be helpful to write the answers on the board to illustrate the diversity (or similarities) between what each student heard, saw and felt.

**Lyrics for “Quand il Pleut” by Alexis Normand**

Avez-vous déjà regardé, Mais vraiment regardé la pluie tomber? Un voile transparent La fine dentelle d’une avers de matinée.

Avez-vous déjà remarqué L’aquarelle de ce coup de pinceau? La touche unique de la nature Qui fait d’elle un tableau.

Avez-vous déjà écouté, Mais vraiment écouté les gouttes d’eau? Les applaudissements soudains Qui disparaissent aussitôt.

Avez-vous senti l’odeur Mais vraiment respiré l’odeur de la pluie? Avec ses épices de la Terre, le goût du sel Et quelques traces de nostalgie.

**Et le temps passe, Le silence casse. J’entends parler mon cœur encore mieux, Quand il pleut.**

Avec le grondement au loin Un petit tremblement dans ma poitrine. C’est la douce voix qui dissout Ma peur et m’illumine.

Avez-vous déjà écouté, Mais vraiment écouté les gouttes d’eau Sur vos visages Celles du cœur et de ses mots?

**Refrain**

***La la la las...***

**Et le temps passe, Le silence casse. J’entends parler mon cœur encore mieux, Quand il pleut.**

## **Broadcast Program (45 min)**

### **Artist Bio**

**Activity 1** Active Listening

**Presentation 1** Identifying the theme of the lyrics and form of the song (verses and chorus).

**Activity 2** Vocal and body warm-ups

**Presentation 2** Where do song ideas come from?

**Activity 3** Pair and share: song ideas

**Activity 4** More vocal and body warm-ups

**Demonstration** How to organize lyric ideas into verses and a chorus.

**Activity 4** Writing the chorus

### **Questions/ Wrap Up**

If you are watching from a distance text questions to 306.291.7355 or email [liveartsaskatchewan@gmail.com](mailto:liveartsaskatchewan@gmail.com) during the presentations or activities to have your questions answered on air.

### **Materials/ Resources needed during broadcast**

- Chalkboard or whiteboard
- Paper, pencil, and eraser for each student

# **Teacher Guided Post-Broadcast Activity (60 minutes)**

**OVERVIEW:** Students will write lyrics and practice singing their composition.

## **STEP 1: Active listening**

Listen to the rap demo- make sure to use the MP3 with the “la la la’s” sung over the music (“Rap with laas.mp3”). Ask students to listen carefully to identify the song’s form;

1. Does it start with a verse or a chorus?
2. How many verses? How many times is the chorus repeated?

## **STEP 2 : Discussion**

**Discussion:** ask students to identify the song’s form.

**Answer:** verse-chorus-verse-chorus.

## **STEP 3: Develop the song lyrics**

### ***Option 1:***

Use the ideas your class generated during the broadcast and build on it. Skip to #2 below.

### ***Option 2:***

Begin writing a new song using the steps demonstrated by Alexis during the broadcast.

- 1. Have students brainstorm ideas around a given theme as a starting point** (for example: summer, sports, food, school)

Use the three methods that Alexis demonstrated during the broadcast

- Constellation
- Photos/images
- Newspapers

- 2. Identify a song theme and create a plan.** Work with the class as a whole to identify a theme. Make a list of words/ideas on the chalkboard and, as a group, decide which words/ideas will be included in the chorus, and which ones will be included in the verses. Plan to write one chorus and two verses.

Possible questions include:

- What is the main message our chorus will communicate?
- What will each verse talk about (two total)?

### **Create the plan:**

For example, if the class chooses “summer” as their theme, a possible song plan could look like this:

## **Materials/ Resources for Post-Broadcast Activity**

- Chalkboard or whiteboard
- Pencil, paper, eraser for each student
- An assortment of colour photos/ images (books, magazines, etc) for reference as inspiration for lyrics.
- Old newspapers (English or French)
- Demos (mp3) provided by Alexis (go to <http://www.liveartsaskatchewan.com/programs/alexis/> and click the “resources” tab

\*\*\*Note that there are two versions of the demo- one with “lalalala’s” for use in **Step 1 Active Listening**, and one without vocals for use in the final **Practice** step.

*Optional:* dictionaries can be useful but aren’t necessary (French-English dictionary, Thesaurus, Rhyming dictionary, etc.)

**1<sup>st</sup> verse:** will speak about the bright, warm summer sun. Words the students could come up with are: sun/fun, bright/sight, hot/a lot, etc.

**CHORUS:** « I love summer»

**2<sup>nd</sup> verse:** will speak about the beach. Words the students could come up with are: sand/bland, swimming/playing, castle/hassle, etc.

### 3. **Write the lyrics.**

Continue working with the class a whole or divide them into smaller groups.

- If working with the class as a whole, write the chorus first. Encourage students to create lines that rhyme if possible. Then write two verses. Write the lyrics on the board as they are created.
- If dividing students into smaller groups, assign one group to write the chorus and the rest of the groups to write verses. Ask students to create rhyming verses if they can. If there are more than two groups writing verses, that's OK: create two versions of the song with different verses in each version. Make sure to visit each group while they are working- they may need assistance with rhyming, vocabulary, etc.

### 4. **Read through the final version.**

- If working as one large group, read through the verses and chorus that you have written on the board together.
- If the class has been working in smaller groups, have one member from each group write their chorus or verse on the board. As a large group, decide what order the verses should go in. Then recite the lyrics together as a large group.

### 5. **Practice**

Practice makes perfect! Use the demo without vocals (rap karaoke.mp3) provided by Alexis to practice singing the student's lyrics. Sometimes students are shy about singing. Encourage the whole class to sing (avoid choosing soloists – some great singers are too shy to sing alone!). Instead, you may prefer to ask each group to sing the section they wrote.