

Engaging iPad Music Projects

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Using iPads in the Music Classroom

iPads are a fantastic tool in the music classroom: they are highly portable, multi-functional and there is a wealth of inexpensive creative apps available. Whilst iPads are certainly not everything, they are an effective “Swiss Army Knife” music technology tool.

Just some of the things you (and your students) can do with an iPad:

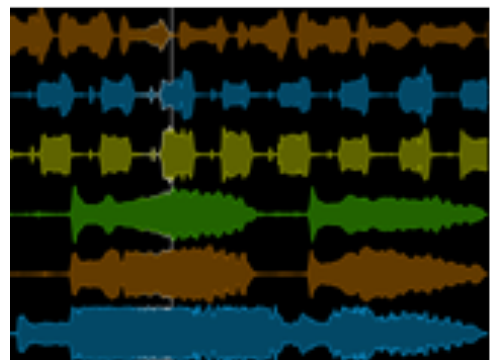
- Record voices and instruments
- Use it as a looping pedal
- Create and capture compositions
- Do arrangements and remixes
- Provide guitar amplification and effects
- Create and play backing tracks for rehearsal or improvisation purposes
- Drill aural training exercises
- Make multimedia assignments
- Read interactive books
- Scan QR codes
- Easily store and read sheet music
- Carry a portable tuner and metronome
- Store chord and fingering charts at your fingertips
- Listen to music
- Make your own tutorial videos

Live Looping

A live looping app allows you to become a one-man band. Older students can use the app themselves – to record vocal or instrumental backings, to lay down an ostinato and to improvise. Recording a perfect loop (especially the first one) requires a little skill, so if you work with younger students, you can do this part yourself and then have the students sing or play the subsequent parts.

Apps:

- **Everyday Looper** (by Mancing Dolecules) \$6.49
- **Loopy HD** (by A Tasty Pixel) \$8.49



Creating “Soundboards” and Remixes

With the **MadPad HD** app, you are invited to “remix your life” by recording sights and sounds from your everyday surroundings to make into your own original percussive or melodic instrument.

MadPad HD allows you to record a set of 12 sounds. Each sound has video as well as audio. Once you have recorded your sound set you can play the sounds back and record your performance.



There is LOTS of scope for education:

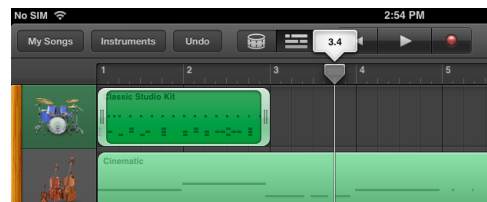
- The 12-sound challenge: challenge students to record 12 different sounds from a single object or a limited space (a chair, from their hands, from the desk, from the playground equipment, in the gym)
- Stomp-style performance: using the 12 sounds recorded in the 12-Sound Challenge, students can then perform and record a rhythmic composition in the style of the Stomp performing group.
- The remix project with a 4-chord song: older students can use their analysis and arranging skills to create a remix of a known song. Use each of the 12 squares to recording snippets of the bass line, melody or inner parts of the song.
- Sol-fa scale and pentatonic compositions: students can record a different scale degree in each square. They could sing or play a sol-fa scale or a pentatonic scale and then perform improvised melodies with the sound set.
- Performing the 12 bar blues: students can use three of the squares to record chords I, IV and V and the remaining squares to record the notes of the blues scale.
- SFX boards for stories: each of the 12 squares can be used to record a separate sound effect which can be utilised in story-telling activities.

Playing Virtual Instruments and Multitracking

The iPad is an effective and easy-to-use tool to create and record compositions and arrangements. Using a multitrack recording app like **GarageBand** (by Apple) is also a fantastic way to teach students basic music tech skills that they can transfer to fully-fledged software programs on laptop and desktop computer.

Using GarageBand you can:

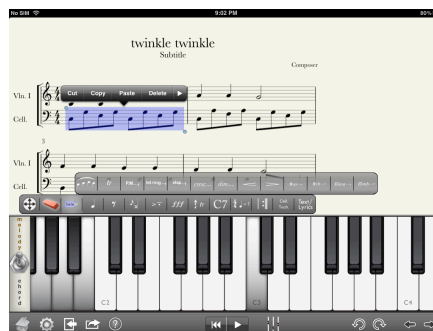
- Play virtual instruments
- Record multiple tracks
- Record voices, guitars and other instruments
- Improvise
- Create digital stories
- Sample sounds
- Play and record drum patterns



Notating Compositions

There's currently only one decent notation app available on the iPad: Notion (by Notion Music Inc.) \$15.99.

Using Notion, students can enter notes on to a staff by using an on-screen keyboard and then add dynamic markings, articulation, lyrics and guitar chords. Once completed, the project can be exported in a number of formats: as a PDF, as a MusicXML file (a format that can be opened by desktop notation program like Sibelius and Finale), as a MIDI file or as an audio file.



Creating Interactive Treasure Hunts and Multimedia Displays

You've probably seen QR (Quick Response) codes around the place: square, "barcodes" that can be found on posters, flyers, supermarket products, shop windows, magazines and real estate boards. Once scanned by an iPad with a QR code reader app installed, the QR code will automatically connect the iPad or other smart device to an online location: a website, an audio file, some text or a map. It's this ability to connect to audio and video files that make QR codes particularly useful for music classes.



The possibilities for music education are extensive and very exciting:

- Students can create a poster of their favourite band or artist which includes QR codes that link to videos of the artist performing, a map of their birthplace, their Wikipedia article or band website
- Printed sheet music of student compositions can include a QR code that links to an online recording of a performance by the composer
- Who Am I? puzzles or treasure hunts can include QR code links to multimedia clues about a famous musician: videos, audio examples, text answers, websites and maps
- Notated compositions of students can include a QR code that links to audio commentary about the student's compositional thought process

What you need:

- To read a QR code on your iPad (or other smart device), you need to install a QR code reader app. There are many available and most are free. I use one called the **i-nigma QR code Reader app** (by 3G Vision)
- To create QR codes, you can use a free online QR code generator such as www.qrcode.kaywa.com I usually do this part at my laptop, rather than on the iPad. Type in the online destination for the QR code (a web address), click on Generate and then save (download) the QR code image that appears. This QR code image can be used in Word documents, Sibelius scores, stuck on drawings and so on



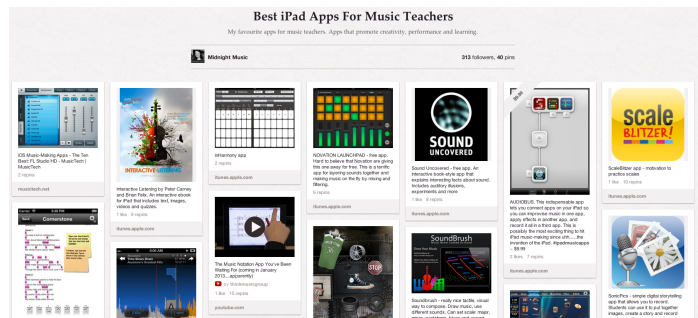
You might like to consider creating a “Singing Wall” in your classroom where students’ notated compositions are displayed. Students can record themselves singing or playing their compositions and then upload the file to the online audio sharing site Soundcloud or into a Dropbox folder. A QR code can be created using the link to the audio file, printed out and then stuck on to their notated composition on the wall.

All Links In One Place (Online!)

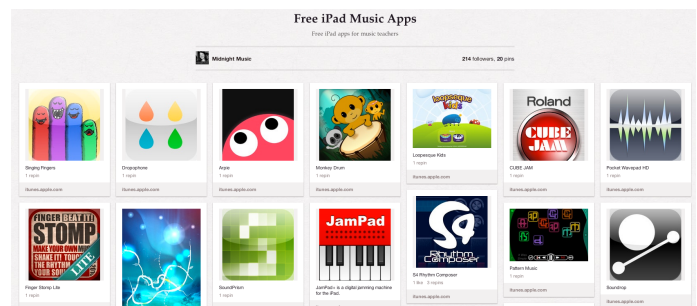
You can find the links to all of these apps together online on the website Pinterest. Go to www.pinterest.com/katiewardrobe for my curated collections of iPad apps and many other music technology resources.

Two useful collections:

Best iPad Apps for Music Teachers
www.pinterest.com/katiewardrobe/best-ipad-apps-for-music-teachers/



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