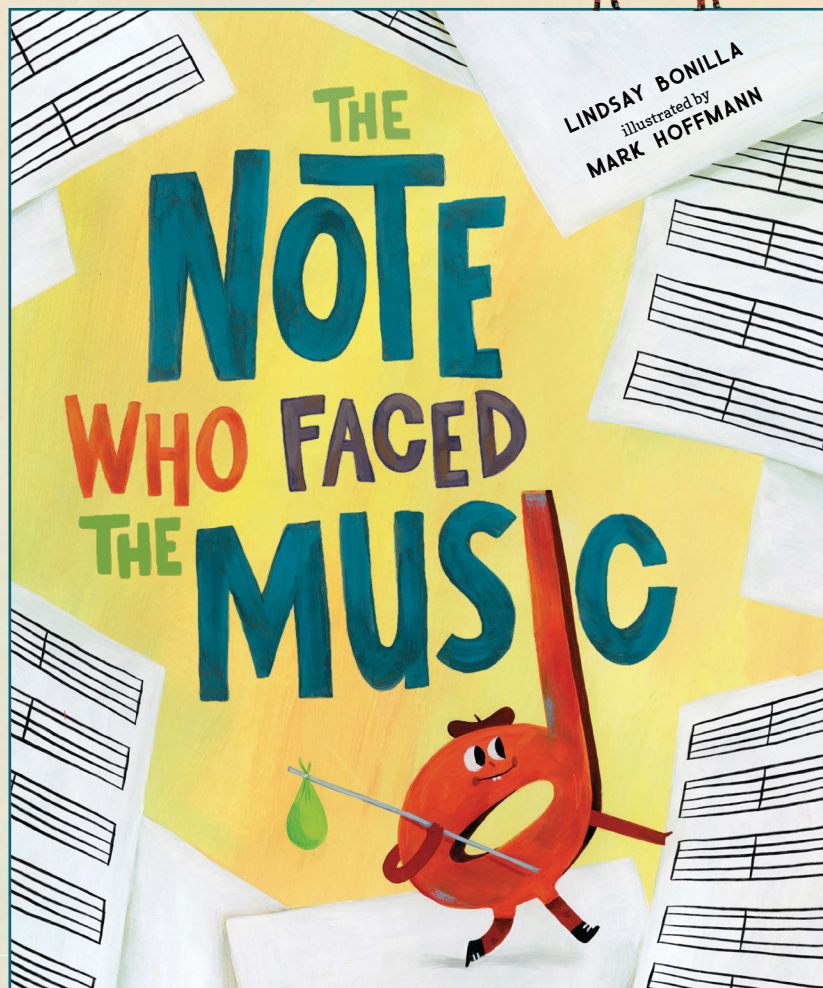


# EDUCATOR GUIDE

## THE NOTE WHO FACED THE MUSIC

Written by  
**LINDSAY BONILLA**

Illustrated by  
**MARK HOFFMANN**



PUBLISHED BY

**PAGE  
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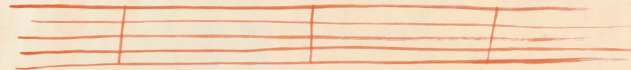


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Half Note doesn't feel whole. With two beats, she isn't as big and beautiful as Whole Note, or as quick and upbeat as Quarter Note. She worries she'll never measure up! So when the other members of the musical staff are at rest, she picks up like a fast tempo and leaves.

But Composer and the staff can't play anything noteworthy without Half Note. Their only hope is to convince Half Note to change her tune and come back.

This hilarious, offbeat tale of sheet music in treble will strike a chord with anyone who's felt out of sync, ringing with reassurance that everyone has a part to play when working as a team. At the coda, readers can develop their ear with a glossary of musical terms included.



**LINDSAY BONILLA** is the author of multiple picture books, including *I Love You with All of My Hearts* (Creative Editions) and *Polar Bear Island* (Sterling). While she doesn't consider herself to be very musical, she has dabbled in playing keyboard, cello, and, most recently, the top two strings of an electric bass. She lives in North Canton, Ohio, with her husband and two sons.

**MARK HOFFMANN** thinks all his talent must have gone into illustration, as his ability to carry a tune is nonexistent. Luckily, his strengths have been put to good use in many picture books, including *A Penny's Worth* (Page Street Kids). Mark loves sharing playfully educational stories like this one with his son. He also works as a college professor and lives in Salem, New Hampshire.



"A hilarious story about musical notes and the value of everyone [...] Music lovers will appreciate the puns that abound through the story, and the happy ending is sure to please just about everyone." — **SCHOOL LIBRARY JOURNAL**

"Nonstop wordplay [...] well suited for classroom use alongside instruction." — **PUBLISHERS WEEKLY**



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## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS



1. Before reading *The Note Who Faced the Music*, ask: Based on the front cover, what do you think this book is about? Why do you say that? Let's brainstorm: What do you already know about music? Do you know what a half note is? If yes, can you explain it? What role does music play in your life? When and where do you most often listen to music? How does music make you feel? Why do you listen to music?

RL.3.6 Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.

2. At the beginning of the story, Half Note feels like "the staff would be better off without her." At the end of the story, Half Note says she "belongs in those spots." She realizes that her friends needed her in order to play her favorite song. What does it mean to you to belong? What spaces or groups do you belong to? How do you help other people feel like they belong?

RL.3.3. Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

3. At the end of the story, Half Note realizes that she'll never be whole, but that she is also "an instrumental part of the musical staff –and no one could play her part like she could." So, what does it mean to be instrumental? Why do you think Half Note is instrumental to the composer? Why do you think Half Note is instrumental on her own?

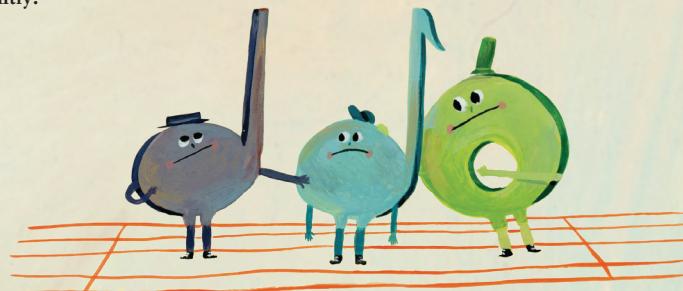
RL.3.3. Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

4. How do the illustrations help tell the story? What do the colors tell us? What do the different images show us about how Half Note and the other characters feel as they experience conflict? What choices does the illustrator make to help us see and feel the story better?

RL.3.7 Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).

4. What is a glossary? How important was the glossary in helping you understand the key words in the story? Why do you think the author includes the glossary?

RL.3.6 Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.



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## ACTIVITIES



### INSTRUMENTALLY YOU

*The Note Who Faced the Music* is a sweet story about how a half note finds her place on the staff and in the world. Half Note is an instrumental part of the staff, but she doesn't feel that way. She runs away, but soon discovers how important she really is. In this activity, students will identify what makes them an instrumental part of your classroom. Students (and adults) often struggle with the idea of feeling important in and outside of the classroom. This activity helps create text-to-self connections with the book, highlights students' strengths, allows them to build confidence in themselves, and see how truly instrumental they really are.

After reading the book, discuss with students the idea that both in the story and in real music, all of the notes are important when creating a song. They work together as a team. Ask students to think about their school and their classroom. What role do they play in each? What are they good at? What makes them special, unique, or proud?

If students are struggling or need a little extra support, brainstorm some ideas as a class on the board or in their notebooks. For example, you might write a character's name from a book you have read together in class on the board and brainstorm what makes this character special and unique. This could be done on chart paper, on a smart board, or using a word cloud website.

<https://www.freewordcloudgenerator.com/generatetwordcloud>  
<https://www.wordclouds.com/>

Once students discover what makes them unique, they will then create their very own musical note that represents their special qualities! Their musical note can be any shape and color they want. Just like the musical note characters from the book, they can design their notes to have real personalities. What would their note wear? What color best represents the unique you? Will the note wear a particular type of clothing to show the role you play in your class or school?

Once students are finished with their drawings, display them around the room or school! You could even create your own class music staff with all of the beautiful instrumental notes to show off all of the wonderfully instrumental students! From here the possibilities are infinite: Students can write about their notes, share their notes with family, friends, and more!

**SEL Competency:** Self-awareness: The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts.



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## PLAY YOUR OWN TUNE

When Half Note returns and rejoins the group, they play music together and everything clicks! Music is a huge part of our everyday lives. Having students spend time exploring music in their own way is extremely beneficial. “Learning music powerfully reinforces language skills, builds and improves reading ability, and strengthens memory and attention” (<https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-music-primers-brain-learning/>). With that in mind, this activity gives students an outlet to express themselves and create music! There are multiple ways to create music in the classroom from simple to advanced and everywhere in between. You choose what works best for your students! Students can write their songs, create melodies online, or even make their own instruments.

Explore some of the following resources to find the best fit for your students or use your favorite music-creation tools!

[Chrome Music Lab](#)

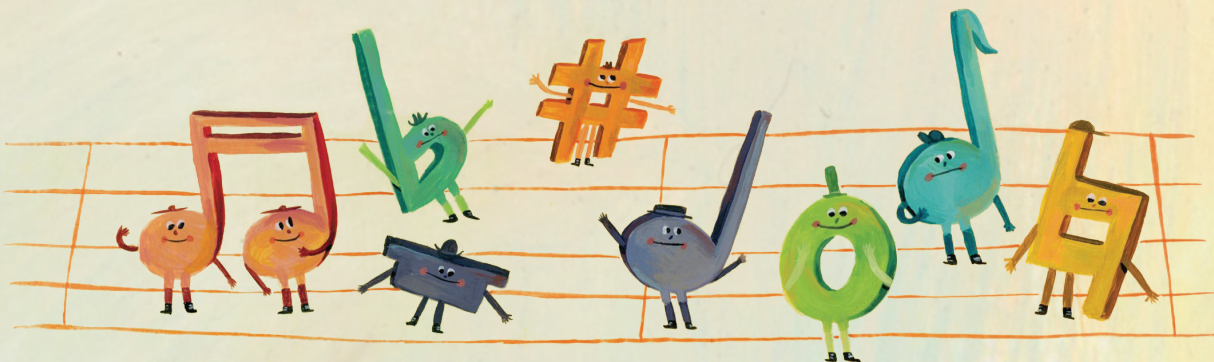
[Rap Music Generator](#)

[Students Create Musical Instruments](#)

Once students have chosen how they want to create their music and whether they prefer working solo or with a partner or group, let the creativity begin! Teachers may provide guidance or requirements (e.g., choose 3 words from the glossary in the back of the book to use in your piece in some way, music should include fast and slow tempos, music must include lyrics, music must express an emotion) or allow full freedom for students to explore and create to their heart's content. The point of the activity is for students to create a new sound.

After students have created their own tune, consider a musical parade through the hallways of the school or a field trip playing music on the sidewalks of their local community.

Creating: Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.



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## HALF NOTE'S NEXT ADVENTURE

Sometimes when we get to the end of the story, we want to know more! What happens next? Today, students will get to create the "more" for Half Note! Students will be able to create their own adventure for Half Note by putting their composer skills to work! Instead of composing a song, students will compose a writing masterpiece.

### Pre-Writing Chat!

Before you begin this activity, take an inventory of your class and your students. This activity will have students writing their own narratives continuing Half Note's story. Have you already taught them about narrative writing? Do they understand what a narrative is? If you have already spent time talking about narrative writing, spend a few moments refreshing your students on the main concepts (beginning, middle, end). If you haven't taught narrative just yet, this is a great opportunity to do so!

→ Tell students:

- ◆ You will be composing a narrative that reveals what might happen to Half Note after she returns to the staff.

→ Ask:

- ◆ What is a narrative? Brainstorm together what they think a narrative is. Reminder, a narrative tells a story.
- ◆ What parts do you think a narrative should have (e.g., characters, setting, conflict, theme/main idea, beginning, middle, end)? If this is your first time teaching narrative, spend time discussing each part (What happens at the beginning of a story? Etc.).
- ◆ Discuss examples of these elements from *The Note Who Faced the Music*. Who are some of the characters, what's the setting, what problems/conflicts arise, and what is the main idea of the story? Identify the beginning, middle and end.

### Pre-Write!

Before you begin this activity, take an inventory of your class and your students. This activity will have students writing their own narratives continuing Half Note's story. Have you already taught them about narrative writing? Do they understand what a narrative is? If you have already spent time talking about narrative writing, spend a few moments refreshing your students on the main concepts (beginning, middle, end). If you haven't taught narrative just yet, this is a great opportunity to do so!

→ To get started with the pre-write, draw or write in response to this prompt:

- ◆ What do you think might happen after Half Note returns?

→ Have students brainstorm independently or in groups. Be sure to give students an opportunity to share their thinking through think, pair, share or collaborating with the whole class.



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## → Beginning:

- ◆ Think about what Half Note or her friends might **say**, **do**, or **think** at the beginning of your story. What might you do next if you were Half Note?
- ◆ Where does your story take place? The same setting as the book or a brand new one?

## → Middle:

- ◆ What **conflicts** might the **characters** have as they move through their day?
- ◆ Think about what Half Note or her friends might **say**, **do**, or **think** in the middle of your story. What might you do next if you were Half Note?
- ◆ Do you want to add **illustrations** to your story? What images will best express your words?

## → End:

- ◆ What **message** do you want to communicate to your readers through your new story?

## Write/Draw!

Writing the draft can be the hardest part, but it is also one of the most important parts of the writing process. Let students know that it doesn't have to be perfect, they just need to **WRITE!** It's time to let those pencils **FLY!** Don't worry about mistakes...editing and revising come later.

- Write a draft of your narrative to continue the story.
- Remember to use all the great ideas you wrote in your graphic organizer!
- Add illustrations if you choose to add artwork.

## Edit/Revise!

Spending time with students one-on-one to talk about their writing is incredibly valuable. Not only does it help the teacher see what their students are struggling with or excelling at but it also lets students know that someone is invested in their work.

- Meet with your teacher for some writing pointers.
- Meet with a classmate.

- ◆ Swap narratives.
- ◆ Read theirs. They read yours.
- ◆ Tell one thing you liked about their writing. Be specific.
- ◆ Give one suggestion to help improve their writing. Be specific.
- ◆ Feel free to get feedback from and give feedback to even more classmates!
- ◆ Revise your work with your peers' suggestions in mind.



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After students are finished with their writing, it's time to share!

Talk with your students about how they want to share their work in ways that feel authentic to them.

- ◆ Do they want to invite one special person into the class?
- ◆ Do they want to visit a classroom one grade younger than them and read their stories to a reading buddy?
- ◆ Or maybe they want to submit their work to a local writing contest?

The choice is theirs!

W3.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.



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# THE NOTE WHO FACED THE MUSIC

Words by Lindsay Bonilla and illustrations by Mark Hoffman

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **'S BRAINSTORM STAFF**

Use the space provided to plan your narrative!




Characters:
Setting:
Problem/Solution:

**BEGINNING**




**MIDDLE**




**END**

