

Musical Maps

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Overview

When we hear stories about life on the plantation, we learn that not only did singing provide the inspiration necessary for slaves to endure long, painful work days, but song lyrics were also used by the slaves to pass messages along to one another. “Sweet Chariot: The Story of the Spirituals” <http://ctl.du.edu/spirituals/freedom/coded.cfm> introduces us to “signal songs” and “map songs” that provided slaves with instructions on escaping and navigating the Underground Railroad to freedom in the North. While this tradition of clandestine singing may have been born out of necessity in the cotton fields, it was maintained for survival at the lunch counters.

Songs were an equally important part of the Civil Rights Movement – from the pulpits to the streets, singing not only motivated and uplifted supporters – much like their oppressed ancestors, singing helped activists organize. Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth has been quoted in countless publications for telling young demonstrators, “It’s going to be a silent demonstration. No songs. No slogans, No replies to obscenities; however, when you’re arrested, sing your hearts out.” In fact, American Radio Works tells the story of Euvester Simpson, a teenager in Mississippi who was arrested alongside Fanny Lou Hamer and placed in the Winona, MS jail where Hamer was severely beaten. Of that night Simpson states,

“I sat up all night with her applying cold towels and things to her face and hands trying to get her fever down and to help some of the pain go away. And the only thing that got us through that...we sang. We sang all night. I mean songs got us through so many things, and without that music, I think many of us would have just lost our minds or lost our way completely.”

With this lesson, students will explore the diversity in musical genres and identify the similarities and differences in stories told through music from one generation to the next.

Key Words

Spirituals, Underground Railroad, Children’s March, Inspiration, Clandestine

Grade Level

Middle to Upper Grade Levels

Primary Learning Objectives

The students will:

- become familiar with the origination and sound of different music genres.
- recognize the evolution of music based on generational struggles.
- compare and contrast the similarities and differences of the different genres of music.
- write their own song lyrics for personal motivation.

Approximate Duration of Lesson

1-2 Language Arts Block(s)

Materials and Equipment Needed

Writing Supplies, CD Player or Computer with Internet and Speakers, Various CDs or Internet Sources with Examples of the different musical genres (examples are provided below).

Teacher Preparation

The teacher should prepare for this lesson by exploring the resources listed at the end of this lesson in search of music samples for each suggested genre. Ideally the teacher will locate audio and visual interpretations of the various songs along with song lyrics. The teacher may want to review additional websites listed under the “References” section of this lesson to learn more about the evolution of music and the role it played in the community during difficult times. The teacher should also make copies of the Venn diagram located at the end of this lesson or be prepared to instruct students on how to make their own.

Procedures/Activities

- Begin the lesson by writing the letters, “K,” “W,” and “L” across the top of the board or on chart paper. Explain to the class that you all are going to discuss what they “*Know*,” what they “*Want to know*,” and what they “*Learned*” about the impact music has on social situations.
- Utilizing the information provided in the background section of this lesson, give the students’ information about the role music has played in our lives, especially in times of trouble. Discuss with students the history and evolution of music from spirituals sung on the plantation, to blues sung when one is “down on their luck.” Now, ask the students to share what they *already know* about the topic and write their answers under the “K” section.
- Once they are finished, move on to ask what they *want to know* about the lesson and write their questions under the “W” column.
- Name additional styles, or genres, of music and identify their relevance to the lesson. For instance, you may want to continue the discussion about the evolution of music from spirituals to blues and then on to protest songs, Rhythm and Blues (also known as R&B), rap music, etc. Next, play a few examples of songs that you selected in advance. After listening to the songs, ask the students to reveal the messages they heard the artists trying to convey through the music and lyrics. Ask if there is anything else that they would like to add to the “K” column. Now have students provide examples of songs and artists that they know who share a positive message with their music as well. If you would like, you may add these to the “K” list. In addition, allow students to add to the “W” list if they so choose.
- Distribute the Venn diagrams to students, or hand out blank sheets of paper and ask each student to draw two sets of overlapping circles on the paper (you may need to demonstrate this procedure on the board). Tell students that they should label each circle with a particular genre of music that they plan to compare and contrast: Spirituals, Protest Songs, Contemporary/Popular, and Rap/Hip-Hop. You can suggest the two pairs that they work with or allow the students to compare and contrast their own two chosen sets of music genres.
- Next, have students compare and contrast the different styles of music. They may choose to describe the music’s purpose or message (uplifting, empowering, directions, protest, etc.); where the songs are typically sung (place of worship, work place, demonstration/march/rally, concert, plantation, jails, etc.); or the types of artists that

perform the songs (professional, folk, community, groups/individuals, gender, race/ethnicity, age, etc.).

- Finally, revisit the KWL chart started at the beginning of this lesson. Review the things that the students said they already knew and ask them if their questions were answered or things they wanted to know more about. Lastly, ask students to share what they learned from the lesson, and add their responses to the remaining blank column, “L.”

Assessment Strategies

The students should be given credit for meaningful participation in the whole group discussion and for thinking critically about the individual and overlapping qualities of songs that inspired the movement.

Extension

As an extension activity, have students choose an issue of concern in their own life and write song lyrics that reflect their experience. They should write within the context of a selected genre of music discussed throughout this lesson and perform their song for the class if they feel comfortable doing so.

Remediation

Students could write lists of attributes under headings labeled for each music genre.

Additional Resources

Spirituals/Gospel:

- “This Little Light of Mine” (Various Artists)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xx3nTsFJEQE>
- “Follow the Drinking Gourd” (Various Artists)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=me6U63uSp24>

Protest Songs:

- “Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me ‘Round” (Various Artists)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c5Z1trynEHs>
- “We Shall Overcome”- Various Artists and Performances
 - Contemporary version performed by current artists (2012)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k0Kcm2e5YPE>
 - Joan Baez, 1963
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XPONpG32ZmQ>
- “Birmingham Sunday” –Joan Baez (1963)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WQ0y-vO9QLE>
- “The Revolution Will Not be Televised” –Gil Scott Heron (Not censored) (1970)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_VJuZ_KUwUE

Contemporary/Popular Music:

- “A Change is Gonna Come”-Sam Cooke (1964)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NaNzxniXxYE>
- “Message From a Black Man” – The Temptations (1969)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_yNbQQDnEw
- “Gift of Acceptance” – India Arie (2010)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53tv4bi6DZE>

Rap/Hip-Hop:

- “Fight the Power (Full Length)” - Public Enemy (1989)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?gl=US&hl=en&client=mv-google&v=Kj9SeMZE_Yw&nomobile=1
- “Proud to be Black” – Run D.M.C. (1989)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PVnSadDq8s0>
- “Politrikks” – Dead Prez (2008)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3faiBmSdfL0>

References

American Radio Works

http://americanradioworks.publicradio.org/features/oh_freedom/story1.html

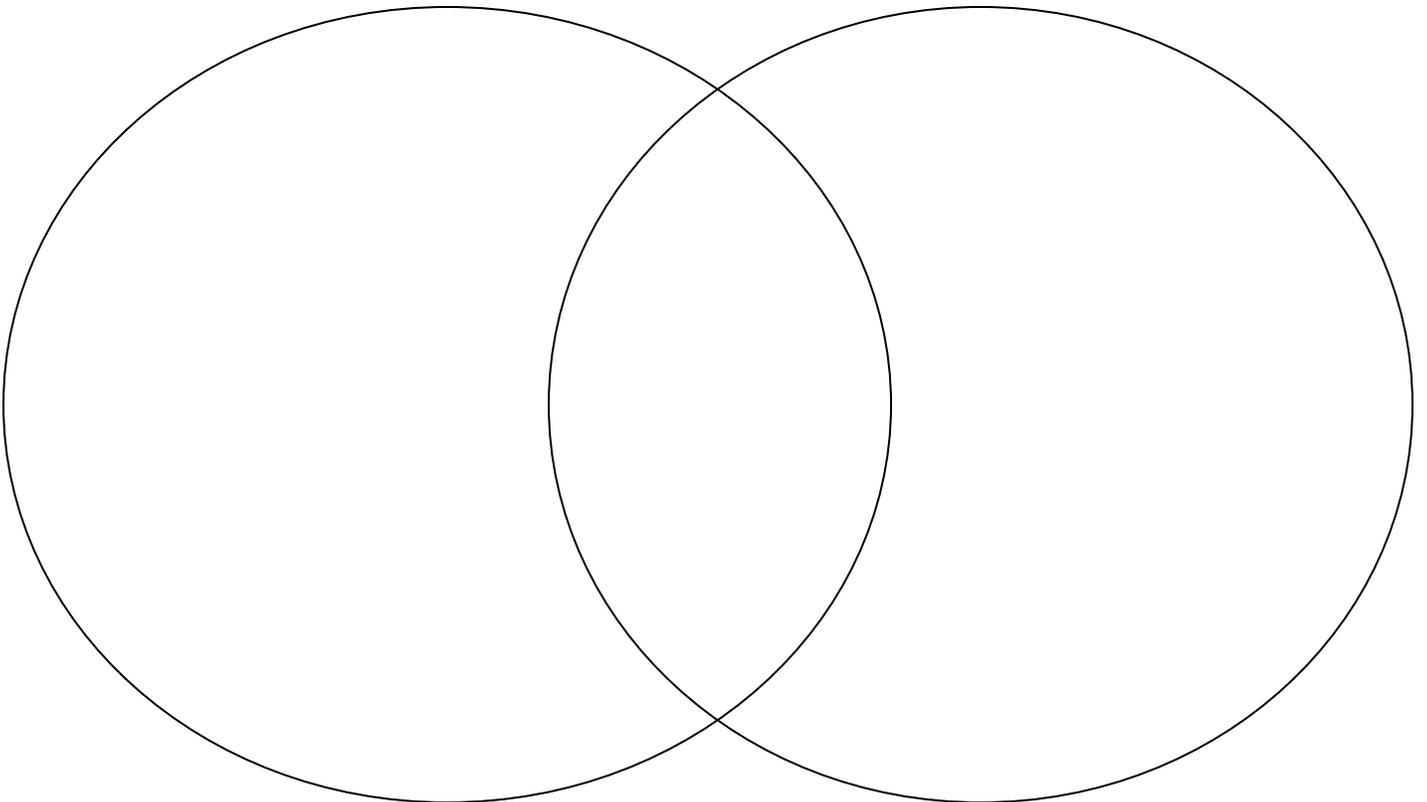
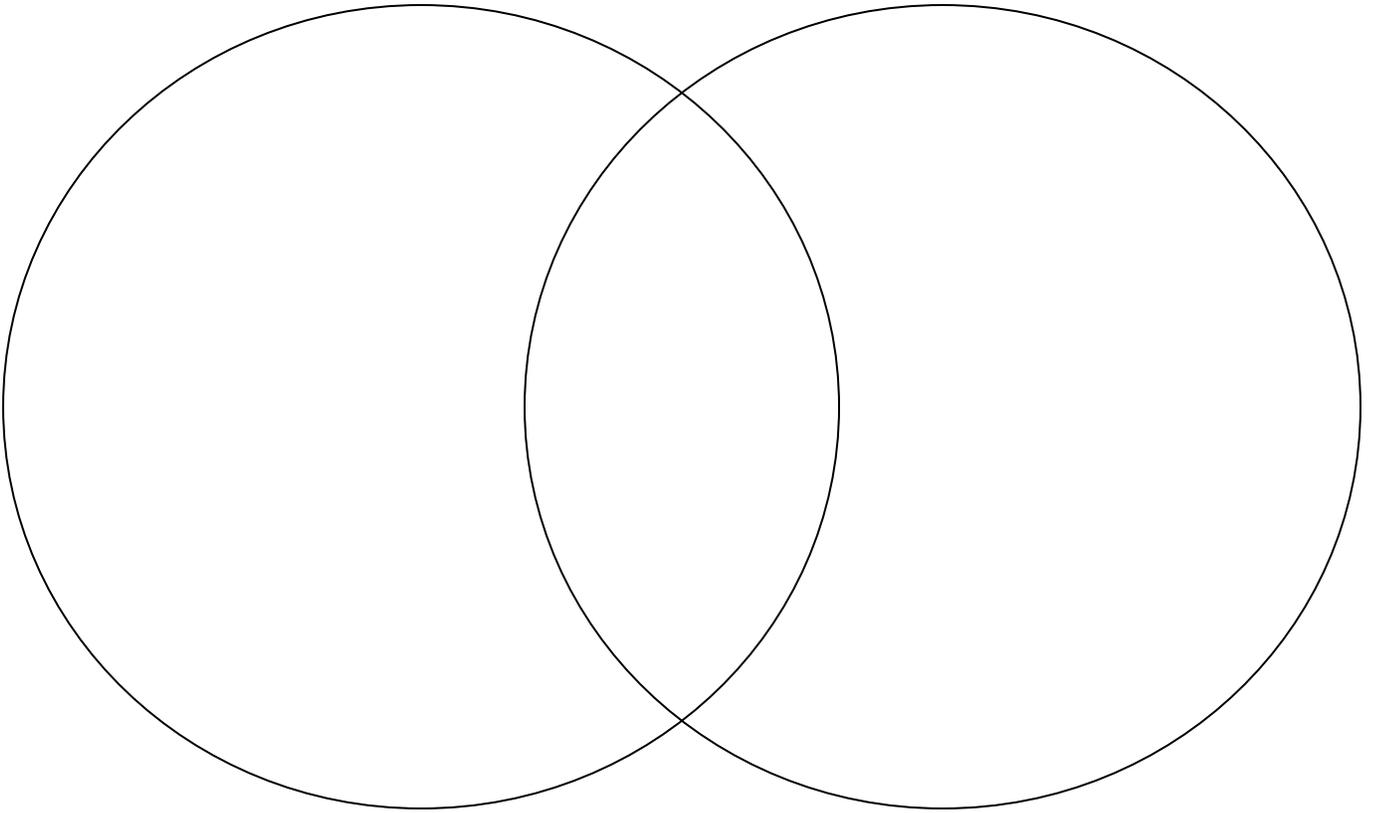
Essence Magazine, “Music of a Movement”

<http://photos.essence.com/galleries/music-movement-20-socially-conscious-classics/?slide=274921>

All About Jazz: A Brief History of the Blues

<http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=18724#.UVupE5NOSSp>

**MUSICAL MAPS
VENN DIAGRAM**



Social Studies Course of Study Standards

SIXTH GRADE

Standard 10. Identify major social and cultural changes in the United States from 1945 to 1960.

Examples: movement to the suburbs, introduction of television and rock and roll, increased birth rate during baby boom, changes in the transportation due to the Federal Highway Act

Standard 13. Describe the role of major civil rights leaders and significant events occurring during the modern Civil Rights Movement

Examples: civil rights leaders—Rosa Parks, MLK Jr., Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth
Events—*Brown vs. Board of Education*, Montgomery bus boycott, student sit-ins, march on Washington, D.C.; Freedom Rides, Civil Rights Act of 1964; Malcolm X; voter registration efforts; Selma to Montgomery march

SEVENTH GRADE – Citizenship

Standard 11. Describe examples of conflict, cooperation, and interdependence of groups, societies, and nations, using past and current events.

- Tracing the political and social impact of the modern Civil Rights Movement from 1954 to the present, including Alabama's role. *Extension to consider the impact.*

ELEVENTH GRADE

Standard 14. Trace events of the modern Civil Rights Movement from post-World War II to 1970 that resulted in social and economic changes, including the Montgomery bus boycott, the desegregation of Little Rock Central High School, the march on Washington, and the Freedom Rides.

- Tracing the federal government's involvement in the modern Civil Rights Movement, including the abolition of the poll tax, the desegregation of the armed forces, the nationalization of state militias, *Brown versus Board of Education*, the Civil Rights Acts of 1957 and 1964, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965
- Explaining contributions of individuals and groups to the modern Civil Rights Movement, including Martin Luther King, Jr., James Meredith, Medgar Evers, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)
- Identifying people and events in Alabama that influenced the modern Civil Rights Movement, including Rosa Parks, Autherine Lucy, John Patterson, George C. Wallace, Vivian Malone, Fred Shuttlesworth, *the Children's March*, the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church bombing, and the Selma-to-Montgomery march
- Describing the development of a Black Power movement, including the change in focus of the SNCC, the rise of Malcolm X, and Stokely Carmichael and the Black Panther Movement
- Describing the impact of African-American entrepreneurs on the modern Civil Rights Movement Examples: S. B. Fuller, A. G. Gaston

Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 6-12

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Standard 7. *Integration of information from Walking Tour, sculptures, and original photographs.*

Grades 6-8. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

Grades 9-10. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts).

Grades 11-12. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 6-12

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

Standard 7.

Grades 6-8. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

Grades 9-10. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Grades 11-12. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

English Language Arts Course of Study

Speaking and Listening Standards

Comprehension and Collaboration

[SL.6-12.1] Engage [initiate and participate – grades 9-12] effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade-level topics, texts, and issues*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Information from Walking Tour, sculptures, and original photographs.

[SL.6.2] Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.

[SL.7.2] Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study. *With extensions to lesson plan.*

[SL.8.2.] Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation. *With extensions to lesson plan.*

[SL.9-12.2] Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally), [in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, - grades 11-12] evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source [and noting any discrepancies among the data – grades 11-12]. *With extensions to lesson plan.*

Language Standards

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

[L.6-8.6]. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.