EXPLORING CULTURE THROUGH MUSIC
AT AN INDEPENDENT STUDIES HIGH SCHOOL

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A Project

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Abstract

of

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Music is a means of communication and expression that plays an essential role in the lives of most people in the world and throughout history. In fact, there is no known culture that exists today or any in the past that haven’t used music. The United States is a place where numerous cultures collide and music is an avenue that allows people to maneuver through society and gain meaning of life through multiple perspectives. However, across the country and especially in the northern California region, children lack adequate music education as public schools continue to focus on language arts and math, dismissing music as an extracurricular activity.

Independent studies charter schools have grown considerably in recent years and need to prepare today’s students for the demands of living in a multicultural society that is complex and multifaceted (Barrat & Berliner, 2009). Cultural diversity is our nation’s strength and we harness its power by allowing students to explore the struggles of
humanity and social justice through the study of music. Multicultural music can be used as a bridge to understand cultures that are different in order to build trust, tolerance and respect in the classroom. Furthermore, exploring the music of one’s culture allows students to relive and celebrate their unique heritage, encouraging pride, self-esteem and self-confidence.

The author’s project focuses on the creation and implementation of a University of California/California State University (UC/CSU) approved, multicultural music course at an independent studies high school where she is employed. The project contains a series of music lesson plans that are designed for a weekly, 90-minute music class session. Following the lesson plans are additional independent studies assignments for students to complete at home during the week. It is the intent of this project to raise awareness about the benefits of multicultural music education for all students while providing practical lesson plans to implement inside and outside of the traditional classroom setting. Participating in a multicultural music program offers students more than an awareness of culture and music; it provides authentic voices that speak of the struggles and triumphs of the human race while giving every student a voice that is heard, respected and recognized.

______________________, Committee Chair
Dr. Peter Baird

_______________________
Date

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I would also like to thank Dr. Peter Baird for his guidance, direction and expertise in the field of music. His positive feedback encouraged me to work diligently, while expressing my creativity and love of music.

Finally, I dedicate this project to my loving grandfather, Pop Pop. He noticed my love of music early on as a young child and provided me the means to pursue this passion. Although he never had the opportunity to witness my growth as a musician and educator, his memory remains in the heart and soul of my music.
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The United States is home to people who come from all over the world, yet it attempts to shape all of its inhabitants into one defined culture. Often, as generations of people progress through American society, they lose their unique sense of identity through the process of acculturation and assimilation. Youths, in particular, are negatively affected by messages of cultural uniformity in society as is often reflected in our country’s educational system (Freire, 1970; Ginwright, 2004; Littky, 2004). Students who attend charter schools that provide independent study programs are not exempt from these issues. Many independent studies students are secluded during the school day due to the nature of their educational setting. Therefore, it is imperative that independent studies students have multiple opportunities to explore and learn about their own culture as well as those in surrounding communities.

Statement of Purpose

Over the last decade, there has been a significant increase in the number of high school students who are enrolled in independent studies programs. “During the 2006/7 school year, “58,788 students were enrolled in fulltime independent study in grades 9-12 in California’s 231 independent study high schools – up 44.2 percent from 2001/02” (Barrat & Berliner, 2009, p. ii). While the enrollment in traditional public high schools has decreased, independent study high schools are experiencing an increase of students (Barrat & Berliner, 2009). Independent studies charter schools need to prepare today’s students for the demands of living in a multicultural society that is complex and
multifaceted. Cultural diversity is our nation’s strength and we harness its power by allowing students to explore the struggles of humanity and social justice through the study of music (Beglarian, 2001; Scott, 2006).

The best place to fight cultural illiteracy is in our schools. If we give our children the tools to understand the universal as well as the culturally specific qualities of music, they can begin to claim a musical heritage of their own. This cannot help but produce adults who are more creative and aware and more understanding global citizens (Chasalow, 1989, pg. 3).

Therefore, the purpose of this project is the implementation of a culturally relevant, multicultural music program at Harrison Charter School (HCS), a pseudonym for an independent studies charter school. The music course provides high school students the opportunity to gain insight into cultural variation and tolerance both independently and collaboratively (Bloustien, 2007; Brown, 1995; Seeger, 1992). Exploring the music of one’s culture allows students to relive and celebrate their unique heritage, encouraging pride, self-esteem and self-confidence (Chasalow, 1989; Ecker, 1990; Scott, 2006). As students emerge from adolescence discovering their authentic selves, it is also during this time that positive and negative biases towards other cultures often originate. Hence, participating in a multicultural music course allows students to value and respect their own identity as well as those that are different from their own. “As a reflection of America’s increasingly pluralistic society, the study of multicultural music is an integral component of the National Standards for Arts Education as well as most if not all state and school district standards” (Mixon, 2009, p.66).
Statement of Problem

Many public elementary and high schools in the northern California region are not meeting the California Visual and Performing Arts Standards in music (Woodworth et al., 2007; Music for All, 2004). Quality music instruction has been depleted due to a multitude of factors including severe budget cuts, the passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Proposition 13, coupled with a shortage of highly qualified music teachers. Additionally, schools that educate low income youths are even less like to receive quality arts instruction. In the 2006 report from the SupportMusic Coalition, Denny Senseney, President of Senseney Music explained:

What we can’t have is the creation of a cultural caste system where only the children of the affluent will have the opportunity to have an arts education. The only way the children of the non-affluent are going to get an arts education is in the public school (SupportMusic Coalition, 2006, p. 31).

Psychologists, educators and professionals continue to publish countless articles that demonstrate the importance that music plays in the lives of all children (Allan, 2006; Goldberg, 2000; Gouzouasis, Guhn & Kishor, 2007; Seeger, 1992). Unfortunately, schools that educate large numbers of minority and English language learners in California are often the first establishments to dismiss music education, despite the research that states the contrary. It is baffling to discover that there are libraries filled with information pertaining to the benefits of music education for children’s social and intellectual development, yet, when budgets tighten and programs must be altered, music programs in California are often the first classes that are eliminated (Berube, 1999).
The issues surrounding the decline in music instruction are especially problematic at charter schools where music education is often not included in their curricula (Zecher, 1997). When charter schools do not offer standards-based music courses for independent studies students, parents and children grapple with ways to meet the music standards with limited resources. Some parents make the decision to teach music to their children in their home environment without the assistance of a highly qualified music specialist. This is challenging because unlike other curricular subjects that most parents have already studied in school, music instruction is often a difficult task. The educational demands that are placed on parents, who act as their children’s teachers, continue to increase. Therefore, “most homeschool moms admit they are not fitting as much music, art and physical education into their children’s days as they would like. In the face of requirements and extracurricular activities, music often gets shoved aside for another day” (Tikvah, 2008, ¶1).

In order to meet the standards in music education, parents often send their children to outside music schools that work specifically with home school students and parents (Kuzmich, 2005). However, this alternative can be very costly to families and is especially burdensome to those who come from low socioeconomic households. Numerous parents petition to have their children participate in music courses offered at their home school site (Kuzmich, 2005). The latter remains difficult because many school districts contest the notion of educating home schooled students at their public institution due to financial issues.
In many states, there are laws which make it difficult, or even impossible, for home schooling students to participate in any public school classes or extracurricular activities such as band or orchestra. Though homeschooling parents are taxpayers, their children are not allowed to take part” (Kuzmich, 2005, Home Schooling Band Instruction: Challenges & Solutions section, ¶1).

Hence, quality, standards-based music education must be provided within all independent studies charter schools so that students from every community and socioeconomic background have the opportunity to attain proficiency in this valuable subject.

Across the northern California region, children lack adequate music education as public schools continue to focus on core subjects, dismissing music as an extracurricular activity (Music for All, 2004). HCS exemplifies an institution that does not provide standards-based music instruction to its students. Students at HCS depend on outside music vendors and community colleges to provide music instruction to their high school students. This remains problematic as many parents lack the financial means to pay for outside music lessons and adequate transportation to transport their children to and from community college campuses.

HCS is located in a metropolitan area in Northern California where it maintains a median household salary of nearly $10,000 below the national average. Forty-four percent of HCS students are classified as socio-economically disadvantaged. Ninety-four percent of HCS students graduate high school, yet only 12% graduated with courses that are UC/CSU approved. Like many public schools that are located in low-income areas in
California, HCS students are not provided a two semester, UC/CSU approved, fine arts elective that allows students to be eligible for university admission.

Due to the vast ethnic diversity in the population of California, educators understand the need to address multicultural education. Children in low-income schools, like HCS, often do not have the opportunity to experience success in the traditional classroom setting because their culture and life experiences are often missing from the material being presented (Delpit & Perry, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 1994). Lampkins explained, “I can’t stress enough the importance of our children getting their culture at an early age… Without our history, without our culture, you are just out there on your own” (Delpit & Perry, 1998, p. 182). The California Department of Education (CDE) recognizes that a necessary component of music education is allowing students to experience music from multiple perspectives of “American culture and worldwide ethnic, racial, religious and cultural groups” while respecting “the multiplicity of cultures represented in California schools” (CDE, 2004, Guiding Principles of the Arts Content Standards section, ¶2). Participating in a multicultural music program gives independent studies students the opportunity to experience personal success while cultivating cultural knowledge and awareness of diversity (Scott, 2006; Ecker, 1990; Seeger, 1992).

Significance of the Project

HCS’s mission is to empower students to take charge of their education by connecting their individual needs and interests to a rigorous learning plan, creating critical problem-solvers and lifelong learners. The school encourages a sense of belonging for all students and promotes students’ self-esteem through academic
achievement and continued personal growth. However, the school does not provide high school students the opportunity to participate in a two semester, standards-based music course.

Music promotes healthy self-esteem and a sense of belonging in students (Allan, 2006; Bloustien, 2007; Ecker, 1990). A culturally relevant multicultural music course reinforces a responsive, inclusive learning environment that supports trust, collaboration, risk-taking and a sense of community (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Scott, 2006). Through the study of multicultural music, high school students are able to understand the complex ways in which the fusion and interaction of diverse racial and cultural groups continue to impact the formation of U.S. society and culture (Banks, 2001). As students see their culture and perspective reflected in the school curriculum, it helps to empower racial, ethnic and cultural groups that have been victimized (Ladson-Billings, 1994). When students are given the opportunity to explore social justice issues through music, the music’s content encourages ways to explore issues of self-worth, acceptance and self-respect (Bloustien, 2007; Scott 2006). The author supports the notion that studying and participating in a culturally relevant, multicultural music course encourages independent studies students to adjust and accept diversity in all people throughout their entire lives.

Description of the Project

The author created a multicultural music curriculum to validate students’ individual ethnic identity, history and heritage while meeting the California state requirements for music education. The State of California requires that high school educators design music courses that meet the University of California subject area
requirements in order to prepare students for the demands of college level course work using the “a-g” guidelines while adhering to state curriculum requirements. “A-g” approved courses give high school students the opportunity to become eligible for UC and CSU admissions after graduation. The author submitted all necessary paperwork to the University of California for approval of music course, including the following information: course goals, major student outcomes, a brief course description, course objectives, course outline, information regarding text, supplemental instructional materials, methods and strategies, assessment methods, tools and key assignments (University of California, n.d., Necessary Course Information section).

Through the study of multicultural music, students critically evaluate and reflect on the social, historical and cultural issues surrounding race and culture. Culturally relevant curriculum impacts students’ positive self-identity through the validation and affirmation of various cultures by including the study of Western and non-Western music (Ecker, 1990; Seeger, 1992; Conlon, 1992). This course is student-centered in order to empower and foster healthy self-esteem in all students regardless of ethnic, racial and socioeconomic background. All students are encouraged to participate in the year-long course and have equal access to the program through technology, resources and additional funding provided by HPC and a state-funded arts grant.

Limitations of the Project

This music project was developed for implementation into a high school independent studies charter school and is designed to meet the Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) Standards in Music for the State of California. It may not be applicable for
younger populations or students studying music in a traditional public school setting. The course is a five unit, fine arts elective course and it takes place over a 19-week session. Ninety minutes a week is reserved for classroom instruction while the remaining four hours is dedicated to independent studies assignments. Due to time and budget constraints, the author is implementing the music program in the spring semester of 2010. Therefore, this fine arts elective course can be taken for two semesters in order to fulfill the UC/CSU requirements for admission. Furthermore, this project is in its infancy of design and has not yet been tested on any population of students.

Definition of Terms

Home schooling: Home schooling is a method of educating students where the “parents take sole responsibility, overseeing the entire education of their children in a personal, direct manner” (Kuzmich, 2005, ¶3). Parents act as teachers and tutors to their children and most learning takes place within the homes of students. Parents are also given the freedom to select the curriculum and instructional materials they want to use with their children. Students are expected to meet state standards in a very individualized way and are often not required to participate in state mandated testing. Parents home school their children for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to: individualized learning, low student-teacher ratio, religious considerations, practical, hands-on learning experiences, and dissatisfaction with home public school.

Independent studies: A highly personalized, voluntary form of instruction that allows students to take charge of their education through a customized approach. This alternative educational program consists of an assigned credentialed teacher who directs
the students’ education while the parents act as the teachers’ aides. “While independent
study students follow the district-adopted curriculum and meet the district graduation
requirements, independent study offers flexibility to meet individual students needs,
interests, and styles of learning” (California Department of Education, 2009, Program
Information section, ¶1). Independent studies students participate in all state mandated
testing, including Physical Education testing, STAR and the California High School Exit
Exam. Students who attend Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)
accredited independent studies charter schools are eligible for entrance into the UC/CSU
system upon completion of high school.

WASC: A 501(c) 3 organization that accredits public and private schools, colleges
and universities across Hawaii, California and American/International schools and
colleges abroad (WASC, n.d.). WASC accreditation is a process that is designed to
strengthen schools in order to help them deliver quality educational programs.
Accreditation is important to charter schools because it impacts students’ access to
colleges and universities and career opportunities in a variety of ways. Schools
participate in a WASC self-study review in order to improve the quality of education and
more effectively serve staff and students.

Harrison Charter School: A pseudonym for a WASC accredited, public K-12
charter school that operates through the sponsorship of a local school district. HCS
provides families the opportunity to participate in both home schooling and independent
studies. Students study and learn concepts with the assistance of their parents in their
home environment. However, parents and students meet with a highly qualified,
California credentialed teacher weekly in order to receive tutoring, assignments and assessments. The involvement of the credential teacher varies between families from being highly involved to minimally involved in the instruction of the child.

*Multicultural education*: An ongoing process of educational reform that takes into account the various needs and learning styles of students from all social, class, gender, racial, language and cultural groups with the goal of promoting equality and educational equity (Banks, 2001). “A major goal of multicultural education is to help students to develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function within their own microcultures, the U.S. macroculture, other microcultures, and within the global community” (Banks, 2001, p. 25).

*Multicultural music education*: Students engage in historical, critical and creative inquiries into the music of their own culture along with the cultures of others. Students must first be given the opportunity to achieve their own artistic empowerment by gaining an understanding of who they are through exploration and reflection. Additionally, students participate in musical activities of various cultures for the purpose of understanding it on its own terms (Banks, 2001). Through the study of multicultural music, students empathize with the struggles, accomplishments and feelings of cultures different than their own. Students grasp the meaning of the music in its cultural context through critical thinking, reflection and dialogue (Goldberg, 2000).

*Self-esteem*: A personal judgment of one’s worthiness, capability, success, or significance and the accompanying feelings of approval or disapproval. Students are treated as unique individuals who come into the music course with a wealth of
knowledge, abilities and resources. Self-esteem in children increases as they become an integral part of their own learning by using pre-existing knowledge to bridge an understanding of new information (Ladson-Billings, 1994). All students are expected to perform at an optimal level while at the same time feeling secure and accepted, yet willing to take risks.

*Ethnic identity:* A person’s perceived sense of self that is determined by cultural, racial, social and historical variables (Sheets, 1995). Positive ethnic identity is enhanced through the study of multicultural music contributions, while addressing social and political issues.

*Culturally relevant teaching:* A means of affirming and validating students’ individual ethnic identities through the study of multicultural music while implementing learning strategies that match students’ preferred learning styles. Ladson-Billings (1994) discussed the importance of culturally relevant teaching in schools that educate racially diverse and minority students. In a culturally relevant teaching environment, students are able to make connections between their community, national and global identities (Ladson-Billings, 1994). It recognizes that all students come to school with knowledge and that knowledge must be tapped into in order for learning to be meaningful.
Organization of the Project

Chapter 1 explains the necessity for creating a culturally relevant, multicultural music program in that it provides students opportunities to become more connected with themselves and their learning environment. This project offers students a means of exploring the ways in which numerous cultures have contributed to the formation of American society through music. The course, developed by the author, enables diverse students to see their cultures and perspectives in the school curriculum through a critical lens. It also provides students a balanced view of the nature and development of U.S. culture and society. Furthermore, the study of multicultural music empowers all racial, ethnic and culture groups and broadens views that may have been narrowed by Eurocentric curriculum.

Chapter 2 is a review of literature relevant to this project and focuses on issues related to music education, the connection between culture and music, and the importance of multicultural, culturally relevant music instruction.

Chapter 3 explains the methodology and contains lesson plans that support the multicultural music course.

Chapter 4 presents the reader with a summary of findings related to the study and creation of a multicultural music course at HCS. This chapter also notes specific areas for further research and action. In addition, the author includes a reflection explaining her personal and educational growth from creating the project.
Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review will focus on the following topics: 1) Issues surrounding the decreased funding and support of music education and its effects on schools across the United States and the State of California; 2) Why today’s high school curriculum disenfranchises and does not promote academic achievement and motivation for students who come from culturally diverse backgrounds; 3) The connection between culture and the study of music; 4) The benefits of multi-modal, culturally relevant music instruction; 5) The positive impact of multicultural music education for all students, including the following: improving self-esteem, motivation and engagement in school and increasing academic achievement; 6) The benefits of multicultural music instruction at an independent studies charter school.

Issues Surrounding Decreased Music Education

Our nation is presently facing one of the most difficult times in economic history and our educational system is greatly impacted by this fiscal crisis. On September 3, 2009, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) released a report stating that “at least 48 states have addressed or still face shortfalls in their budgets for fiscal year 2010” (Lav & McNichol, 2009). Many of these states are struggling to adjust to the budget deficit that amounts to a staggering $168 billion or 24 percent of the state budgets. When discussing the next two fiscal years of 2010 and 2011, the estimated budget gap is at least $350 billion. Certainly, the nation’s recession has severely impacted our education system and fiscal problems continue to look dim in the coming years. As a result, at least
36 states have already cut or made proposals to cut K-12 education with additional cuts likely to occur in the near future (Lav & McNichol, 2009).

Historically, VAPA programs (music, visual art, theater and dance) in the U.S. have been particularly vulnerable to school district budget cuts (Reed, 2005). In December 2007, the Center on Education Policy (CEP) studied the effects of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) on thirteen K-12 urban, rural and suburban school districts across the United States. The CEP discovered that found that at least 30% of school districts have already decreased instruction time in the arts since the enactment of NCLB (McMurrer, 2007). NCLB (2002) mandates music as a core subject, but often teachers are not afforded time or materials to implement a quality music program in their classrooms. Therefore, music education is often neglected and educators are forced to focus primarily on standards-based reading and math instruction.

U.S. Representative George Miller (D-CA), chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, continues to examine the ways in which music instruction benefits the nation’s economy and schools. Since February 2009, Miller has continued to hold a series of hearings that examine the benefits of music education and how its decline is damaging the US economy. Experts in the field of music are continuing to share their knowledge and research with Congress in order to demonstrate how supporting music programs can help build a stronger America (Miller, 2009).

Recent news reports have highlighted the tough economic realities music organizations are facing – many are cutting budgets and programs that provide important services to local communities (Miller, 2009). President Barack Obama is a firm
supporter of the arts and music instruction in schools and the community. He believes that participation in music is crucial to the wellbeing of children and adults. Miller (2009) said, “President Obama has made it clear that arts and music have a critical role to play in improving our schools, our workforce and our overall quality of life” (¶3).

Similarly, former governor of Arkansas, Mike Huckabee, noticed the need for the advancement of music in education while he was chairman of the Education Commission of the States (ECS). The Governor’s Commission on the Arts in Education spearheaded the work of the ECS Chairman’s Initiative. It focused on governors, legislators, chief state school officers, higher educational officials and other education leaders at the federal, state and local levels to make arts education an essential part of every student’s education. In July 2006, he published the Governor’s Commission on the Arts in Education, a report that highlighted findings and recommendations for arts education on a state and national level. Huckabee stated:

From improving academic and student achievement to enhancing our nation’s overall economic competitiveness, the arts offer many practical benefits. In fact, I would suggest that the future of our economy is based on establishing a creative class and creating a generation of people who can think artistically. That’s why an arts education has value in and of itself (ECS, 2006, p. 3).

The ECS Chairman’s Initiative emphasized that policymakers and Commission members are concerned about the disparities that exist in music education in urban and rural areas that contain a high population of minority students. The data maintains that low-income schools, in particular, have eliminated or downsized their general and
instrumental music classes. Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Horne, is disheartened about this worsening situation. He believes that arts education is the key to raising academic achievement and equitable practices in schools that educate underprivileged and minority students. Horne (2006) noted, “An investment in the arts can help narrow the achieve gap between ethnic groups and raise achievement levels in high poverty schools” (ECS, 2006, p.4).

When discussing academic achievement, it is imperative that equity is discussed, as equality assumes that all students are given the same opportunities and experiences in society. “Equity, however, recognizes that the playing field is unequal and attempts to address the inequality” (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004, p. 36). Children enter the classroom with their unique identity and sense of belonging and equitable practices in the classroom recognize and celebrate these differences. Mary Luehrsen explained, “Equity means that music is taught to all children by certified teachers who present a standards-based curriculum and that all children have access to a range of opportunities to make music” (SupportMusic Coalition, 2006, p. 30). When schools that educate high poverty students are void of music education, they are not providing all students the fair and equal education that is promised to each and every child.

A 2001 Los Angeles County Arts Commission study revealed that most of the school districts allocated less than 1% of their total budget to music education. The study also found that most music education programs in high poverty areas were not coherent or sequential, and were mostly dependent on parent fundraising and grants (Music for All, 2004). Additionally, high poverty schools are often so focused on improving state
and national test scores that they fail to offer anything that extends beyond the state curriculum. Administrators often view the time spent on music courses as a waste of time because it is not time spent on studying other core academic subjects. A study of Oakland’s schools, for example, showed that students who had not met district and state standards were sometime excused from music classes in order to take additional math and language arts courses (Music for All, 2004).

California has a history of dwindling music education due in part to the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978. After Proposition 13 was enacted, almost all of the funding for music education in California was eliminated. Because school districts across the state were faced with a severe economic crisis, they were forced to decide which programs to keep and which to eliminate. Subjects that were deemed most important were the math, science, language arts and the social sciences. Those that were considered secondary were cut, including music, visual arts, dance and theater. Since the passage of Proposition 13, music education in California has been in a continuous state of crisis (Music for All, 2004).

The California Board of Education (CBE) recognized that it was necessary to create a framework for educating all California students in Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA). In 2001, the CBE adopted a formal set of standards and a framework for studying the VAPA in order to educate all students from preschool through grade 12. The framework details specific music concepts that are presented while the standards explain specific benchmarks for student achievement. The VAPA documents require that students receive education in music in order to perform and be assessed at a level equal to
the “core” subjects (CDE, n.d., Grades Nine Through Twelve-Proficient Visual and Performing Arts Music Content Standards section).

However, as evidence suggests, most students are not given the opportunity to achieve proficiency in music education due to lack of instruction in public schools (Music for All, 2004; Woodworth et al., 2007; Zastrow & Janc, 2004). Since California adopted the VAPA standards, many school districts are creating systems to assess their music programs and make improvements in instruction. Hence, there are many challenges to this situation when students are not being properly instructed in music education, yet being expected to be proficient upon arrival at a California university. As music education continues to dwindle throughout the nation and across the State of California, it is imperative that all students, regardless of socioeconomic status or cultural variation, are given equal opportunity to participate in music education. However, educators must be aware that all students do not learn uniformly and consideration must be given to the process by which we educate students in the area of music.

Obstacles of Current Curriculum

In the United States, our greatest strength is our cultural and ethnic diversity, yet in our nation’s schools, the neglect of this subject is often our greatest downfall. Scripted curriculum and standardized educational outcomes have replaced flexible, multi-modal learning environments that benefit students from all educational and ethnic backgrounds (Cuban & Tyack, 1995; Littky, 2004). Authentic assessments continue to dwindle as children are faced with high-stakes testing that often measures limited modalities of learning. The current pressures that are placed on schools throughout the nation are seen
by many educators as insurmountable as districts grapple with ways to meet the needs of
diverse learners while increasing test scores. Littky (2004) said:

Our addiction to testing is blinding us to what we believe in our hearts are the
important lessons our children should learn… With their focus on end results, too
many schools and education policy makers forget how much the process
influences how a kid takes in knowledge and then uses it. Too many forget how
intrinsic motivation and desire are to learning” (p. 5).

In the 1980s, state laws began to mandate minimum competency exams for
students across the nation. Consequently, teachers were forced to teach to the test,
stressing the “basics” by using “drill-and-kill” rote methods (Cuban & Tyack, 1995).
“An unintended result was inattention to complex thinking skills and to the challenge of
fitting the curriculum to the cultural backgrounds of the students” (Cuban & Tyack, 1995,
p. 62). It remains today that many classrooms are so focused on standardized reading and
math lessons that children are not given the opportunity to participate in learning
activities that stimulate their interest, creativity and imagination. The Brazilian educator
and social activist, Paulo Freire, referred to this oppressive state of formalized education
as the “banking” concept. When students are involved in banking education, they are
placed in an environment that is void of true culture and true knowledge. Freire (1970)
noted:

The students are not called upon to know, but to memorize the contents narrated
by the teacher. Nor do the students practice any act of cognition, since the object
towards which that act should be directed is the property of the teacher rather than a medium evoking the critical reflection of both teacher and students (p. 80).

Our nation’s schools continue to alienate students from their own decision-making, while disempowering them through a “one size fits all” system of educating (Cuban & Tyack, 1995; Freire, 1970). This restrictive means of educating is especially detrimental to those who do not fit into the Eurocentric model that is often at the core of current curriculum. Kenneth Wesson, a founding member of the Association of Black Psychologists, said, “Let’s be honest. If poor, inner-city children consistently outscored children from wealthy suburban homes on standardized tests, is anyone naïve enough to believe we would still insist on using these tests as indicators of success?” (2000, p. 34).

According to the 2005 data gathered from the National Center for Education Statistics, minorities made up 33 percent of the U.S. population and are predicted to represent 39 percent of the total population by the year 2020. Yet, our curriculum and testing continues to emphasize Euro-centric values that exclude non-Western cultures in our schools (Seeger, 1992; Ladson-Billings, 1994). Ginwright (2004) added, “Afrocentric scholars argue that cultural omissions in schooling and curricula consequently erode students’ cultural and self-esteem and contribute to poor academic performance” (p. 3).

Banks (2001) maintains that it is necessary to reform current Eurocentric curriculum by integrating non-mainstream content in order for learning to be connected to students identities. Yet, today’s music courses continue to focus on the contributions of primarily Western music. As a result, curriculum is narrowed creating an atmosphere
of hegemony (Ecker, 1990; Seeger, 1992). Regarding the disenfranchisement of non-Western cultures in music, Seeger (1992) wrote:

Such an approach is not appropriate for a democracy - nor is it adequate for the world of rapid and intense international communications in which we live. Teaching according to cultural hierarchy, so that only a few of the traditions practiced in the United States are experienced by our school children, results in a lost opportunity to enhance cultural understanding of an impoverishment of the subject of music itself (p. 69).

Music and the Cultural Connection

Music is a means of communication and expression that plays an essential role in the lives of most people in the world and throughout history. In fact, there is no known culture that exists today or any in the past that hasn’t used music (Levitin, 2008). Some of the oldest human-made artifacts are musical instruments. Early archeological findings suggest that music making has been an integral part of how civilizations have communicated their responses, perceptions and understanding of the world to themselves and others.

America is a place where numerous cultures collide and music is an avenue that allows people to maneuver through society and grasp meaning of things through multiple perspectives.

It is almost impossible to define American culture as a single form of expression. Ours is a pluralistic society and culture. Yet ours is a unique society which allows
enormously diverse cultural traditions to coexist and flourish, each in its own way but in an all inclusive context” (Belgarian, 1991, p. 27).

Music can be used to express a universal truth that continues to be understood by all people, creating a sense of oneness throughout humanity (Conlon, 1992). Belgarian (1991) explains that on a global scale, human bonding may be possible “through music and the arts. If so, we might be able to create a new era in which our unite as humans might be based on the diversity of our cultures, our history, ancestry and values” (p. 29). Therefore, it is crucial that schools create opportunities for all students to feel a sense of belonging while recognizing that there are multiple ways of viewing the same topic.

When teachers encourage students to use music as a means of learning from one another, children are given opportunities to reach an understanding of issues that bond us as human beings (Belgarian, 1991; Brown, 1995; Levitin, 2008). Students can express their own uniqueness through music while becoming “mutually supportive, illuminating, and liberating” (Belgarian, 1991, p. 29). Through the study of multicultural music, teachers are able to promote democratic principles that encourage freedom of expression and equality in the classroom. “Music builds social cohesiveness and can contribute to freedom and democracy. And the extent to which we are successful in this enterprise is a substantial measure of our worth to the country and all its citizens” (Mahlmann, 2004, p. 69).

The United States educates students who come from every corner of the world. Students are individuals and they are all unique even within cultural bounds. Therefore, multicultural music can be used as a means to understand cultures that are different in
order to build trust, tolerance and respect in the classroom (Beglarian, 2001; Bloustien, 2007; Conlon, 1992; Ecker, 1990). Gardner (1983) explained:

Involvement with the arts proves one of the best ways in which children can come to know the greatest achievements of which human beings are capable; it is also an excellent avenue to allow them to contribute to their own culture. If children have these opportunities, they will certainly be using their minds to the fullest (p. 49).

When children are given the opportunity to explore multicultural music at school, they “achieve their own artistic empowerment by gaining an understanding of who they are in the world through their own efforts” (Ecker, 1990, p. 19). Through the study of music, children investigate first-hand how cultures throughout the world are continually evolving in a rapidly changing global society. Music is a resource for the construction of individual identity, yet it can help children shape and reinforce their individual belief systems (Brown, 1995, p. 439).

Brown conducted research around the idea that children and adults alike can “integrate themselves within a fragmented society” through music (p. 439). He examined the socio-cultural conditions, structure and lyrical content of African American spirituals and early delta blues with secular and Christian heavy metal. Brown explains how spirituals and the blues represent a collective response to oppression, while Christian and thrash metal come from an individualistic response to alienation. Throughout the study he demonstrates how musical genres provide “distinct, coherent views of the world while expressing the social experience of the groups they represent” (Brown, 1995, p. 440).
When students are given the opportunity to examine the struggles of humanity across multiple musical genres and cultures, they understand that music can be used as a window through which they can examine social and cultural circumstances. Brown (1995) explained, “It [music] gives voices to our common fears, anxieties, hopes, and dreams, all of which are produced by specific social and historical circumstances” (p. 451).

A 1995 study of rock and rap music demonstrated that music can be used to unify students across varying racial groups. Researchers at the University of Alabama exposed high school students to a series of music videos featuring popular rock, nonpolitical rap and radical political rap. They discovered that African-American students enjoyed more rap while White students enjoyed listening to more rock than rap. However, beyond the students’ musical preferences, the study revealed that listening to the expressions of grievances and social protest in radical political rap “appeared to motivate White adolescents to support efforts toward racial harmony and to oppose White-supremacy agendas” (Zillmann, et al., 1995, p. 1).

Often adolescents seek to establish their independence and they can relate to music that expresses oppression and social protest. Radical political rap music ultimately helped to create a bridge of understanding between African-American and White youths by connecting them to a unifying force and allowing them to identify as a group. It shows that youths who are “initially drawn to rebellious music because of its theme, will come to feel themselves members of a group of adolescents who, because they are
attracted to the same theme, share convictions and dispositions – in short, share pertinent traits” (Zillmann, et al., 1995, p. 5).

It is time that we give all students a voice in the classroom. The study of multicultural music is the avenue through which this can be accomplished. Music instruction builds a community of students that are enriched with ideals that promote the expression of shared experiences and the oneness of humanity. Educators promote democracy in the classroom by allowing students to enrich their lives with music from a variety of cultures. “A multicultural music education can prepare creative musicians and also increase cultural awareness and respect in the cultural mosaic of the United States and the world” (Seeger, 1992, p. 29).

Culturally Relevant Music Instruction

Although there are many challenges that face our educational system today, there are ways in which music educators can provide avenues for learning that foster creativity and cultural pride in all children. Kohn, an educator, author and critic of education’s fixation on grades and test scores, created a model of learning that is intended to help students identify their talents and interests and ultimately leads to lifelong personal satisfaction and self-actualization (Kohn, 1993). Ginwright (2004) explained:

Kohn proposes that intrinsic motivation is developed in learners by giving attention to the notion of what I call artistic teaching, in which children are motivated by the interesting manner in which content is presented, are given opportunities to explore ideas and content in meaningful collaboration with their teachers and peers, and are presented with choices in the curriculum (p. 123).
Music is an invaluable tool because it has the capability of touching the lives of children who come from all racial and social backgrounds. Through the study of music, students are able to learn about their own culture, while acquiring knowledge and respect for surrounding cultures and communities. Seeger (1992) explained, “Music is an effective way to experience at least one aspect of another culture firsthand. Similarities and differences are immediately perceived and the usefulness of difference contributions to musical creativity is easily demonstrated” (p. 70). Therefore, music educators must implement learning strategies that are relevant to the cultures they are educating in order to foster cultural pride and increased motivation for all students.

Culturally relevant teaching takes into account that students are diverse and have individual differences. “Culturally relevant teaching is about questioning (and preparing students to question) the structural inequality, the racism, and injustice that exist in society” (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 128). Teachers can provide diverse learning experiences to students through the unique experiences of music (Honig & Nichols, 1997). A culturally relevant, multicultural music course recognizes the value in students learning about themselves and others by listening, creating, studying and responding to music from around the world. Reed (2005) noted:

Therefore, while the study of music and the arts is critical to the core of our education, it is the study of multicultural music and the arts that places us at the core of education for all regardless of race, religion, creed or nationality (p. 69). A culturally relevant music course allows all students to become engaged in the learning process by providing them opportunities to critically reflect on issues reflected in
the music of various cultures. Arce (2004) demonstrated how teachers counteracted hegemonic classrooms by providing students with a critical view of textbooks. The teachers used their curriculum, not as the sole source of information, but as a reference. They provided additional reading materials and writing assignments to supplement the standard curriculum. In this way, the teachers were able to expose students to a critical reflection of literature, allowing students to construct alternative perspectives.

Similarly, a culturally relevant music course encourages students to thinking critically through the analysis of multiple forms of music literature. It allows students to express themselves through dialogue and personal narratives. Ladson-Billings (1994) emphasized the importance of raising students’ critical consciousness in order for children to question the inequities that exist and empower them for social action. Teachers reshape the music curriculum, building on students’ knowledge and creating a learning connection between school and home. In a culturally relevant, multicultural music classroom, teachers develop a personal relationship with each student, learning and validating their own personal identity. Hence, teachers and students support one another as co-learners, extending learning from the students’ families and communities (Huang, 2002).

Sheets (1995) demonstrated that teachers empower students by taking them to cultural events that include contributions made by persons of color. Similarly, in a culturally relevant music program, students are given the opportunity to experience the sounds of local musicians that represent their own culture and the culture of those with whom they are studying. A wealth of cultural music can be found in local and
surrounding communities. Seeger (1992) emphasized that live performances are a crucial part of a multicultural music program because they bring excitement and wonder to children. A live performance allows students to experience, firsthand, the various ethnic traditions that exist in the U.S. today. Seeger (1992) explained, “Students should come to music for excitement; they should be able to bring their own musical traditions with them and supplement them through exposure to others’ musical traditions” (p. 71).

In a culturally relevant, multicultural music course, students are supported through the learning process so they can comprehend and inquire about new concepts as they are presented. Teachers take on the role of mentor and coach, going beyond the typical classroom role of instructor (Ladson-Billings, 1994). When educators take an earnest interest in the lives of their students, they demonstrate a willingness to assist children through the learning process, counteracting a top-down approach to educating. Students and teachers learn from one another in an environment of mutual respect and understanding. Often, students possess strengths that can be used as instructional starting points. This creates a positive learning atmosphere where students are empowered by their personal knowledge before moving into information that presents more of a challenge (Morrison, et al., 2008; Sheets, 1995). Freire (1970) explained:

If students are not able to transform their lived experiences into knowledge and to use the already acquired knowledge as a process to unveil new knowledge, they will never be able to participate rigorously in a dialogue as a process of learning and knowing (p. 19).
Therefore, a culturally relevant, multicultural music program allows all students to learn from their own strengths, while empowering them to understand new concepts through a multi-modal, student centered learning environment.

The Positive Impact of Multicultural Music Education

Students who participate in music programs often experience success and a feeling of accomplishment if they are encouraged to utilize self-discovery and creativity while new concepts are being learned. “Research indicates that if students are to achieve, they must first see themselves as achievers” (Mazzarella, 1978, p. 9). When music teachers create an atmosphere of challenge, respect and belonging in the class, they foster positive self-esteem. Therefore, educators play an extremely crucial role in the lives of all children because their attitude towards learning is, in fact, communicable.

When teachers have faith in their students’ abilities while allowing them to change, grow and learn, students see themselves as instruments of change and experience positive self-esteem as learners. Students who possess positive self-concepts find success in the classroom (Mazzarella, 1978, p. 9). Mazzarella (1978) noted, “Self-esteem was improved after experiences in the Fine Arts more than after either sports or debate activities in High School students” (p. 47). Participation in music education allows students to discover and identify themselves and their strengths while the teacher maintains a role that includes fostering intellectual and emotional growth in all children.

When teachers acknowledge and value students’ background culture in the learning process, they are able to make connections that go beyond the classroom (Allan, 2006; Beglarian, 2001). One program that best exemplifies the inclusion and celebration
of culture through music is the Young Native Fiddlers located in Fairbanks, Alaska. The children who participate in the project are Alaska Native students, predominantly Athabascan. The Young Fiddlers range in age from kindergarten through high school and have the unique opportunity to participate in violin and Athabascan fiddle lessons. Yet, the Fiddlers do more than simply make music; they carry out the traditions of their culture through the performance and celebration of the Athabascan fiddle. “Fiddlers is about offering children the chance to learn a new musical skill, develop literacy skills, and build connections to their cultural community and to their schools” (Allan, 2006, p. 27).

The Young Native Fiddlers program started as a response to Alaska Native’s unusually high dropout rates of 8-9% compared to the general school population of 5-6%. In addition, Alaska Natives make up over 40 percent of the dropout rates across the state and start an academic decline after fourth grade (Allan, 2006). “In fact, the longer they stay in school, the more the achievement level of these children declines” (p. 26). Researchers discovered that a majority of students found it fairly easy to drop out of school because they did not have a connection to their school. Therefore, the Young Native Fiddles creates a cultural connection between students who often feel alienated from their public school experience.

When discussing the school experience of Alaska Natives and American Indians, researchers agree that cultural strength enhances academic success (Delpit & Perry, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 1994). The comment from one student after a performance reiterates the importance of cultural pride. “This is when I really feel Native!” (Allan, 2006, p. 26)
Hence, music acts as a medium between the home and school environment for children who are often disenfranchised in their daily curriculum. It acts as a communication system that explores personal and cultural meaning. Through the celebration and performance of Athabascan music, the school communicates acceptance and encouragement to its Native students.

Asserting among themselves that it is “okay to be Native” and affirming that positive identity publicly in front of family and community, wearing mets’eghe hoolaanes (a traditional Athabascan hooded jacket) and playing the violin that is a part of their cultural heritage is significant for these children (Allan, 2006, p. 27).

The Young Native Fiddlers project demonstrates that when students are given the opportunity to participate in music activities that foster cultural pride and self-esteem, they are motivated to find academic success in institutions where they often experience failure.

Similarly, involvement in music allows youths, especially in high-crime areas, to express themselves and it increases their self-esteem so they are better able to make decisions and not give into dangerous influences that are prevalent in their neighborhoods and communities. In many low-income areas, children are often at high risk of becoming involved in bullying, drugs and other criminal activity. Music can help students find a release from their troubles at home, with friends and in the community. It offers children a path to success that might not be discovered in traditional academia (Mehuron, 1990).

“Music involvement is a form of cultural capital that seems to provide cognitive and
social tools that help students successfully navigate the educational terrain” (Roscigno & Southgate, 2009, p. 19).

There have been numerous studies conducted over the last decade that demonstrate the positive correlation between music education and increased academic achievement (Catterall, 1998; Gouzouasis, Guhn & Kishor, 2007; Johnson & Memmott, 2006; Mehuron, 1990). Dr. Christopher Johnson, (Johnson & Memmott, 2006) the Associate Dean of the School of Fine Arts at the University of Kansas, led an investigative study on the connection between music education and academic achievement. The study was conducted through the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Foundation’s Sounds of Learning Project research initiative. It demonstrates that independent of the socioeconomic level of the school or school district, students in high-quality music education programs score higher on standardized tests compared to students in schools with deficient music education programs (Johnson & Memmott, 2006).

The study included 4,739 elementary and middle school students in four U.S. regions and the statistics demonstrate that regardless of location, all students benefit from music instruction. Results showed that students in top-quality music programs scored 22% higher in English and 20% higher in mathematics than students who did not receive music instruction. The middle school study demonstrated that students in instrumental music programs scored 19% higher in English and 32% higher in English than students whose schools did not offer a choral music program. Students who attended schools who were exposed to top-quality instrumental programs scored 17% higher in mathematics
than students in schools without a music program and 33% higher than students who were in a deficient choral program (Johnson & Memmott, 2006). Certainly, this study demonstrates the importance of including music programs in schools and negates the notion that music and arts education take away from instructional time for reading and math.

Similarly, James Catterall, a UCLA researcher, demonstrated that music making improves test scores, academic performance and motivation despite students’ economic status or family educational background. In a ten-year study tracking 25,000 students in grade 8 to 10, Catterall discovered that when students were involved with making music, they received higher marks in standardized tests than those who had no music involvement (Catterall, 1998). After participating in arts programs, students became more interested in school life and were less likely to drop out of school. Catterall’s study also showed that students who came from low-income families and participated in arts programs were more likely to do better academically than those who did not. The test scores studied were not only standardized tests, such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), but also reading proficiency exams. Catterall (1998) explained, “…there is a steady flow of studies reported in the music education field showing academic benefits resulting from music training – benefits including reading skills, cognitive flexibility, speech skills, motivation, and reduced attention-deficit disorders” (p. 8).

In many metropolitan areas across the U.S., including Chicago, Washington, D.C., New York and Los Angeles, arts-based high schools and after school arts programs are empowering children to work collaboratively in order to create a positive sense of
identity and community that ultimately increases academic achievement. Duke Ellington High School in Washington, D.C. is one of four high schools nationwide that offers an arts-based academic program to high school students. Here, students use their heart, soul and mind to bridge a connection between academic subjects and arts education.

Mercedes (1990), a student at the Duke Ellington, noted:

> The arts help my academics. For me to accomplish my music goals, I must know my math; and to be a studio musician, I must know how to read business contracts… I love to act, to perform, to play music. When I’m on stage, that’s my world. Music is like breathing to me (Mehuron, 1990, p. 24).

For many inner-city youths, arts programs are a refuge from their life experiences that are often filled with conflict and violence. City Hearts, a Los Angeles-based arts program, reaches out to young, street-hardened children by providing lectures and demonstrations inside juvenile detention centers. It provides equal access to arts education to all children. Without this program, most youths in this city would not have the opportunity to experience arts education. John Pickett, an instructor at City Hearts, gives children the opportunity to fuse music and dance together. He instructs students to exercise their bodies, empowering them to use music and movement as a form of expression and creativity. Pickett (1990) explained:

> By doing those exercises, it focuses their attention and primes them for rearming. As a result, test scores have improved because their attitudes changed and the kids got centered… These children need to be presented with as many choices as
possible-otherwise the girls hit the streets and the boys sell drugs. They’ve got to feel good about themselves or they cannot learn (Mehuron, 1990, p. 24).

A recent study of high school students illustrates that, in fact, that “the time dedicated to music participation does not impede, but rather goes hand in hand with or even fosters academic excellence in other ‘core’ subjects” (Gouzouasis, Guhn & Kishor, 2007, p. 81). The 11th grade subjects were tested before and after participation in one of the following courses: Band 11, String 11, Choir 11 or Music Composition. The findings demonstrate that, compared to their non-music counterparts, music students consistently demonstrated higher achievement in the areas of mathematics and Biology (Gouzouasis, Guhn & Kishor, 2007).

Numerous governmental studies have been conducted over the last decade continuing to support that notion that music and academic achievement are synonymous (Music for All, 2004; SupportMusic Coalition, 2006; Woodworth, et al., 2007; Zastrow & Janc, 2004). Representative George Miller (D-CA) supports the research that reveals a strong correlation between quality music education in school and academic achievement, healthy social development, preparation for the 21s century workplace and the quality of a young person’s life (Miller, 2009). He stated:

Like so many other sectors of our economy, the arts and music are suffering greatly – hurting millions of workers and families who depend on these industries for good jobs and the students who benefit from participation in arts and music education in school. Research shows that when students are exposed to arts and music, they perform better in other subjects (Miller, 2009, ¶2).
Multicultural Music and Independent Studies

Charter schools must recognize that music instruction is a necessary part of every child’s high school education. The dedication to music instruction is imperative because independent studies students continue to demonstrate that they are lacking proficiency in the California VAPA standards in Music (Berger, 2009; Tikvah, 2008; Zecher, 1997). It is often difficult for parents who home school their children to help them meet state standards in music because many parents are products of California public school education and have not been adequately trained in music. “Adults who don’t have prior musical training quickly realize that they are just as confused as their children, and need a professional music teacher to show the way” (Berger, 2009, ¶ 1).

Unlike other curricular subjects that most parents have already studied in school, music instruction is often a difficult task. Due to the complexity of the subject, it may take between three to four years of study before an average adult student is able to play intermediate-level music proficiently (Berger, 2009). While it is possible for non-musical parents to play an important role in their child’s development of music, most turn to their home school to help them provide music instruction in this area so their children may advance beyond their abilities. Thus, the author discovered that many independent studies students are not provided an appropriate music education at their charter and this remains problematic.

The National Association for Music Education (MENC) recognizes that there has been a dramatic increase in the number of students who are home schooled throughout the last decade. It maintains that although more students who are not enrolled in public
school want access to public school resources, especially in the area of the arts, schools are being challenged to rethink their role regarding the boundaries of public education. MENC encourages music educators to remain neutral on the issues that include parents, public schools and tax dollars “except when it comes to the right of every child to receive a music education” (MENC, n.d. ¶9).

Whether children receive their education in a public, private, or parochial school, or at home, music education remains a core subject, and MENC maintains that adequate music education resources should be available to all students, regardless of how children obtain their education (MENC, n.d. ¶1).

Cultural diversity is our nation’s strength and we harness its power by allowing students to explore the struggles of humanity and social justice through the study of music. Music is a vehicle that can build bridges between communities of students that are often isolated from one another. Offering a high school multicultural music course at an independent studies charter school gives parents, teachers, and children the opportunity to work together to create lessons that are highly engaging and creative. Multicultural music addresses the needs of independent studies students who come from families that represent all races, income brackets, political and religious affiliations (MENC, n.d. ¶2). It also encourages the sharing of music with other families and students so the education is not isolated. “As a tool, the arts enable us to cross boundaries that are usually closed to us, or to join together in ways that are new” (Goldberg, 2000, p. 10).
In conclusion, this literature review outlines the foundation for the author’s music curriculum and explains why music education plays a significant role in the lives of all students. As our country continues to battle a string of financial crises that negatively impact the support of music education, the literature maintains that music benefits students’ self-esteem, motivation and engagement in school and increases academic achievement. Our nation’s schools are filled with students who come from ethnically diverse backgrounds. Culturally relevant music instruction allows all students to celebrate their unique sense of self while promoting cultural understanding and tolerance. The following chapter will explain in greater detail the methods and procedures used for the implementation of a high school independent studies music course.
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This project is a one semester music course that introduces students to the following California VAPA Music Standards: 1.0 – Artistic Perception, 2.0 – Creative Expression, 3.0 – Historical and Cultural Context, 4.0 – Aesthetic Valuing, and 5.0 – Connections, Relationships and Applications. The curriculum outlines the first of a two-part series that fulfills the fine arts requirements for UC/CSU admission. The author will implement the first half of the program during second semester of the 2009-10 school year. During the following school year, the course will be offered as a yearlong class, providing students a more in-depth examination of the California VAPA Music Standards 1.0 through 5.0.

Through extensive research and an analysis of current charter school curriculum, the author recognized that high school independent studies students are not given equal access to quality music education (Kuzmich, 2005; Tikvah, 2008; Zecher, 1997). This accessibility is critical to the future educational success of students as participation in a yearlong, “a-g” approved fine arts course fulfills the requirements for UC/CSU admission. HCS was not providing students the opportunity to attain proficiency in the standards, so the author took into consideration the needs of the students while creating the course. Therefore, a UC/CSU approved, multicultural music program gives all students equal access to a quality educational program that may lead to further studies at the university level.
The author submitted detailed information about the music course to the University of California ("University") in accordance with the requirements for "a-g" approval. The University requires that all music courses address Music Standards 1.0 through 5.0 while focusing on the following items: General description of the course, course objectives, course outline or list of topics, student assignments, texts and/or instructional materials, and instructional and assessment methods. Hence, the project is designed in such a way that it demonstrates academic rigor as required by the University, yet is readily accessible to future educators who are searching for ways to incorporate culture and identity into the teaching of music. Each lesson is designed for a 90-minute class session with additional hours dedicated to independent studies assignments.

The author believes that the implementation of a music class at an independent studies high school cultivates a multicultural atmosphere that is necessary for the future development of global citizens. Adolescence can be a difficult time period for young people as they often seek out their independence and identity. Music offers students ways of exploring issues of self-worth, acceptance and self-respect.

Music instruction that is culturally relevant allows students to bond together through universal themes and issues found in song. It gives them the opportunity to come together to be part of a social group for a common purpose. Yet, it encourages students to have pride in the traits that make them uniquely multicultural. Furthermore, research reveals that when children study issues of social justice and humanity through multiple genres of music, they are more likely to gain acceptance and tolerance of other cultural groups (Brown, 1995; Zillman, et al. 1995). Therefore, it is the effort of this project to
stimulate interest among educators to recognize that no culture is without music and therefore, there is no student who cannot connect to the study of music. As educators, we motive children to learn when we respect their home culture and use it to drive instruction. Implementing a music program of this nature at an independent studies charter school promotes equal access to music education while providing multiple opportunities for students to explore culture through music.
Guide to Music Lessons & California State Standards

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Summary of California Visual & Performing Arts Music Content Standards
Grades Nine Through Twelve

1.0 Artistic Perception
   1.1-1.3  Read and Notate Music
   1.4-1.6  Listen to, Analyze and Describe Music
2.0 Creative Expression
   2.1-2.5  Apply Vocal and Instrumental Skills
   2.6-2.10  Compose, Arrange, and Improvise
3.0 Historical and Cultural Context
   3.1-3.2  Role of Music
   3.3-3.5  Diversity of Music
4.0 Aesthetic Valuing
   4.1-4.2  Analyze and Critically Assess
   4.3-4.4  Derive Meaning
5.0 Connections, Relationships, Applications
   5.1-5.2  Connections and Applications
   5.3  Careers and Career-Related Skills
Lesson 1

Music is…

Our History and Culture

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify and discuss the importance of music in their lives and family culture (4.3).
- Discuss issues relating to linguistic, ethnic and cultural diversity in the metropolitan Sacramento area.
- Explain the terms: multiracial, multicultural, and ethnicity, as they relate to students local and global identities.
- Identify and discuss aspects of their self-identity and culture while connecting it to music (4.3)
- Choose and examine a melody or song that represents their culture and heritage to share (3.5, 4.3).

Materials

Student Music Survey
Time Magazine article “Welcome to America’s Most Diverse City”
My Multicultural Musical Self worksheet

Procedures

1. Students complete the Student Music Survey independently. Ask participants to pair up with somebody they do not know and share the information on their surveys. Invite students to introduce and share the information about their partner to the class.

2. After students share their responses, connect the diversity of students’ responses to the article “Welcome to America’s Most Diverse City.” Read article aloud and prompt students to dialogue about the following topics:
   a. 70 languages, One System
   b. The Most Segregated Hour
   c. Shades of Blue
   d. All of Me

3. Discuss the following terms: multiracial, multicultural, and ethnicity as they relate to the article and students’ life.
Lesson 1

4. Explain the following: *There is no culture that exists today or in the past that hasn’t used music.* Music has been an integral part of how people communicate their responses, perceptions and understanding of the world. Ask students to get into groups of two and answer the following questions. How have cultures in the past or present used music? Provide at least two examples for each:

   a. Communication
   b. Religion
   c. Education
   d. Celebration
   e. War
   f. Protest
   g. Recreation/Enjoyment
   h. Storytelling
   i. Change one’s mood, evoking feeling
   j. Healing

5. Allow time for students to share their responses with the class and introduce independent studies assignments for the week.

Assessment

Evaluation is based on a point scale from 0 - 3. Points are awarded based on proficiency of standards. (0 = Unsatisfactory, 1 = Fair, 2 = Very Good, 3 = Excellent)

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</table>
Lesson 1

Independent Studies Assignments

1. Each one of us has our own unique history and identity. Some of us identify ourselves as part of a cultural group that is specific to race, language or our country of origin. This week, I want you to complete the worksheet: My Multicultural Musical Self by identifying your Race, Language, Gender, Culture, Language, Class and Personal History on the outside squares. Then think of a particular song or kind of music that overlaps that part of your culture. Be prepared to share with the class, aspects of your identity that coincide with music.

2. Albert Einstein said, “If I were not a physicist, I would probably be a musician. I often think in music. I live my daydreams in music. I see my life in terms of music.”

How do you see your life in terms of music? Bring in a song that represents your family culture and identity to share with the class. Bring a copy of the words to place on the Lyrics Wall in the classroom.

Be prepared to explain:

a. Why you chose the song;
b. The ways in which you connect your identity and culture to the song;
c. The significance of the lyrics, melody and/or instrumentation;
d. When and where you usually listen to this song; and
e. How the song makes you feel.
1. Who are some of your favorite musicians? ____________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________

2. If I could listen to anything right now, it would be ____________________________

3. My favorite album is ____________________________________________________________

4. I listen to music ____________ a day.

5. My favorite music website is ____________________________________________________

6. My favorite time to listen to or play music is _________________________________

7. If I could pick any song or piece of music that would best represent me, it would be
__________________________________________________________________________________

8. I want to know more about _______________________________________________________

9. If I could play any instrument, it would be __________________________________________

10. Have you ever written lyrics or a melody? ________________________________________

    If so, would you be willing to share it with others? _________________________________

11. Is there a particular kind of music or a song that represents your family culture?
________________________________________________________________________________

12. What do you think makes a good musician?
________________________________________________________________________________

13. Tell me about a song that you remember from childhood.
________________________________________________________________________________

14. Do you ever listen to music when you want to change the way you feel? Explain.
________________________________________________________________________________
Lesson 1

My Multicultural Musical Self

Lesson 2

Music is…

A Means of Evoking Feelings, Moods and Emotions

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Explain how people in a particular culture use and respond to musical works from that culture (1.4, 4.3)
- Describe how music is used to create images or evoke feelings and emotions from various cultures (4.4)
- Identify various functions of music in diverse cultures throughout history (3.2)
- Connect elements and artistic processes between visual art and music (5.1)
- Describe how music is used to evoke feelings and emotions in television and radio advertisements and movies (5.2)

Materials

Computer with Internet access and speakers
Music samples from Data Dragon website (http://datadragon.com/education/genres/)
Art supplies including paints, coloring pencils, pens, construction paper, acrylic paper

Procedures

1. Students share with the class the song they chose to represent their family culture. Students discuss the following:
   a. Why you chose the song
   b. The ways in which you connect your identity and culture to the song
   c. The significance of the lyrics, melody and/or instrumentation
   d. When and where you usually listen to this song
   e. How the song makes you feel
   f. How music overlaps with students’ race, gender, culture, class, language and personal history

2. Students place a copy of the words on the Lyrics Wall for display in the classroom.

3. Give a brief introduction of the following musical genres: jazz, rock, classical, reggae, Celtic, country and blues. Students and teacher explore music samples at the Data Dragon website (http://datadragon.com/education/genres/).
Lesson 2

4. Students answer the following questions while listening to the selections:
   a. How does the melody move?
   b. How does the rhythm feel?
   c. What colors do you see when you close your eyes and listen to the music?
   d. What scenes do you envision?
   e. What tastes does it remind you of?

5. Students choose a song from one of the above-mentioned genres that they would like to explore. Students answer the previous questions and create a piece of art (options including tear art, painting, drawings with pen and ink, pencils and colored pencils) focusing on the chosen song.

6. Students discuss emotions and brainstorm a list of emotions that they experience. Explain that music has the ability to enhance and alter our emotions. This is why music is used so widely in movies, television and advertising.

Assessment

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Lesson 2

Independent Studies Assignments

“There is something very wonderful about music. Words are wonderful enough; but music is even more wonderful. It speaks not to our thoughts as words do; it speaks through our hearts and spirits, to the very core and root of our souls. Music soothes us, stirs us up, it puts noble feelings in us, it can make us cringe; and it can melt us to tears; and yet we have no idea how. It is a language by itself, just as perfect in its ways as speech, as words, just as divine, just as blessed.”

-Charles Kingsley

Choose one of the following activities:

1. Create a soundtrack of your own life. The soundtrack can be music that mirrors your moods and activities or one that is designed to help you cope with different things by elevating or calming your mood. For example: wake up music, traveling music, relaxing music, etc. Bring the collection of songs to the following class for discussion; OR

2. Create a spectrum of human emotions, investigating where on the spectrum different things fall. Organize the spectrum (strong negative to strong positive emotions, for example) and then find music to fit each emotion, thereby creating a musical mood spectrum. This music can be used to transition one from the current mood into a more desirable one.

Complete the following activities:

3. This week, pay close attention to the way that music is used in advertising on television and radio. Cite three examples of how music was used to evoke feelings and emotions in advertising to American consumers and answer the questions in detail on a separate sheet of paper.

4. Provide two examples of how music is used in movies to evoke emotions and feelings and answer the questions on the following page in detail on a separate sheet.
Questions for Radio and/or Television:

1. What product was being sold?
2. How did the advertisement use music to provoke or change the mood of the consumer?
3. Who was the target audience for the advertisement and how did the advertiser use music to focus in on this audience?
4. Did the music change your mood after watching or listening to the advertisement? Explain your reactions.
5. Some advertisers use well-known pieces of music. Why do you think this music is chosen? Can you think of an example?
6. What did you learn about music after completing this activity?

Questions for Movie Music:

1. What movie did you examine?
2. How did the moviemaker use music to provoke or change the mood of the audience?
3. What effect, if any, did the music have on your feelings/emotions?
4. Did music help predict what was to come? Did it enhance the storyline? How?
5. Are there any changes to the film score that you would have made? If so, what are they?
6. What did you learn about music after completing this activity?
Lesson 3

Music is…

A Catalyst for Social Change: Part One

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Analyze the lyrics of protest songs as a catalyst for social change (1.4)
- Discuss the influence of music on behavior (4.1, 4.4).
- Understand the use of music as historical record (3.1, 3.2, 3.5).
- Compose a poem, song lyrics or a song that reflects a social issue that is relevant to students’ life at school or in the community (2.1, 2.6).
- Write a one-page, typed critique of a protest song.

Materials

VHS VCR Player
Television
VH1’s Greatest Protest Songs (Cable in the Classroom edited version)
Critique a Piece worksheet
Protest Song Reference Sheet
Lyrics to “Do They Know It’s Christmas Time?”

Procedures:

1. Draw a circle on the board and inside the circle, write the word "protest." Ask students to consider the word "protest," and briefly discuss its definition. Have them list things that people might protest (social injustice, oppression, disenfranchisement, etc.). List these protest topics around the circle, connected to it with lines.

2. Ask students about the emotions that these protest topics might evoke in a concerned citizen. How do they feel when they see an injustice done? Does the sight of poverty or racism affect them in any way?

3. Have students suggest ways in which people might express their dislike for something (protest marches, petitions, sit ins, etc.). Have them also suggest the various media they might use to convey their protest message (written word, letters to the editor, poetry, TV, music, concerts, etc.). Guide students in suggesting music and concert performances if they are not mentioned.

4. Explain that music is a form of communication that has always been used to convey information, teach, and "fight back" against the causes of protest they listed on their
Lesson 3

graphic. The emotional responses they discussed previously are the basis of all protest songs.

5. Prepare students for the program by explaining that it focuses on the 25 most popular and influential protest songs of the past several decades. Distribute copies of the "Protest Song Reference Sheet," and ask students to take notes on the songs for future reference. Have them also consider the following questions as they watch the program:

a. What emotional response does the song evoke?
b. Does the song express its view clearly?
c. Does the musical genre affect the impact of the song?
d. What issues, problems, or events are presented in the song?
e. Does the song seem to be written in response to a specific event?
f. What points of view or attitudes are revealed?
g. What were the circumstances at the time the song was released?
h. Does this song suggest any solutions to the issues/problems addressed?
i. How effective is this song as a social protest?
j. What, if any, relevance does this song have to American society today?


7. After viewing the program segment, lead students in discussing their notes, and review using the questions above.

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<tr>
<td>Compose a poem, song lyrics or a song that reflect a social issue relevant to students’ life in home or community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Write a one-page, typed critique of a protest song using correct grammar and spelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>OVERALL</td>
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Independent Studies Assignments

Adapted from vh1.musicstudio.com
1. Read the lyrics to “Do They Know It’s Christmas Time?” and watch the video on YouTube at the following web address: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8jEnTSQStGE. Respond to the following question: What was the cause that the artists were supporting through the song?

2. When the song was originally released, some people thought that the message of the need for famine relief in Africa was lost in this star studded, upbeat song. Respond to the following: Do you believe that this song likely raised awareness? Is it more important for the message to be clear, or for the song to attract attention to the message, even if it is somewhat vague? What are your personal feelings, or impressions about the song? Be prepared to share your responses with the class during next week’s class session.

3. Research an issue in school or in your community that concerned you. The issue can be related to gender, religion, race, etc.

4. Write a poem, song lyrics or a song to state your protest message. Be prepared to share your poem/lyrics with the class next week.

5. Choose a song this week that you would include on your top list of protest songs. Evaluate the song using the worksheet, “Critique a Piece.” Compose a one page written review to be shared with class the following week. You may use any of the websites below as a starting point.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Websites related to Protest Music</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.lacarte.org/songs/anti-war/">http://www.lacarte.org/songs/anti-war/</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://www.voicesofcivilrights.org/">http://www.voicesofcivilrights.org/</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://www.farmworkermovement.us/">http://www.farmworkermovement.us/</a></td>
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Adapted from vh1musicstudio.com
Lesson 3

Critique a Piece

A music critic listens to and analyzes music. They often discuss style, instruments, vocals and originality. Some discuss how the music made them feel or how they liked or disliked the work. This is done from an objective point of view, if possible, and is called “writing a review” or a “critique.”

Choose a song that you would consider a “top” protest song. Write a critique of the piece, and include the following information:

- Song title
- Name of the performing artist or artists
- Musical genre to which the song belongs
- Subject being protested
- Personal feelings, or impressions, about the song (remember to be as objective as possible)

Carefully check your critique for correct grammar and spelling, and submit a typed, one-page paper during the next class session.
## 25 Greatest Protest Songs Reference Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song #</th>
<th>Song Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Topic of Protest</th>
<th>Historical Context</th>
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Adapted from vh1musicstudio.com
Lesson 3

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Adapted from vh1musicstudio.com
"Do They Know It's Christmas?"

It's Christmas time
There's no need to be afraid
At Christmas time
We let in light and we banish shade
And in our world of plenty
We can spread a smile of joy
Throw your arms around the world
At Christmas time
But say a prayer
Pray for the others ones
At Christmas time
Its hard but when your having fun

There's a world outside your window
And its a world of dread and fear
Where the only water flowing
Is the bitter sting of tears
And the Christmas bells that ring out
Are the clanging chimes of doom

Well tonight thank God its them instead of you!!

And there won't be snow in Africa this Christmas time
The greatest gift they'll get this year is life
Where nothing ever grows
No rain or rivers flow
Do they know its Christmas time at all?

Here's to you raise a glass for everyone
Here's to them underneath that burning sun
Do they know its Christmas time at all?

feed the world
feed the world
feed the world
(let them know its Christmas time and..)
feed the world
(let them know its Christmas time and..)
feed the world
(let them know its Christmas time and..)
feed the world
(let them know its Christmas time and...) to fade...

Lyrics courtesy of: www.lyricsondemand.com/b/bandaidlyrics/dotheyknowchristmastimeatallilyrrics.html

Adapted from vh1musicstudio.com
Lesson 4

Music is…

A Catalyst for Social Change: Part Two

Objectives

Students will be able to:

• Understand the potential consequences of protest through song (4.3, 4.4).
• Discuss selected historical conflicts presented in song (3.2, 3.5).
• Examine the role of the individual in protest by creating a ballad (3.2).
• Demonstrate support or opposition to a social issue presented in song (5.1)

Materials

VHS VCR Player
Television
VH1’s Greatest Protest Songs (Cable in the Classroom edited version)
Copies of Protest Ballad worksheet
“BIKO” lyric sheets
Song title strips
Biography of Stephen Biko

Procedures

1. Discuss students’ reactions to video and lyrics “Do They Know It’s Christmas Time?” as it refers to the following: Do you believe that this song likely raised awareness? Is it more important for the message to be clear, or for the song to attract attention to the message, even if it is somewhat vague? What are your personal feelings, or impressions about the song?

2. Students pair up and share with one another the poem, song lyrics or song that they created reflecting an issue in school or the community. Students who choose can share their piece of writing/song with the entire class.

3. Students stay seated with their partner and read their critique to one another, assigned from last week’s class. Allow students time to provide feedback to one another. Students who choose can share their critique with the entire class.

4. As students enter the classroom, hand each student a song title strip with the name of one of the songs featured in the segment of the program to be studied during the lesson. Ask students to find the other students in the class with the same song.
Lesson 4

...title, and have them sit together for the activity. List all of the song titles on the board, including “BIKO,” for reference.

5. Lead students in a brief review of "protest," and the many ways in which an individual or group can make their opinion known, whether it be through poetry, protest marches, music, etc. Remind them that they have been thinking about protest as it relates to living in the United States. *Is it as easy to protest something in other countries? Do citizens in other countries enjoy the same rights of freedom of speech and expression?*

6. Tell students that they are about to watch another segment of the VH1 program. Have them consider the following questions as they watch the program:
   a. What role does the individual play in protest?
   b. What are the potential consequences of protest?
   c. What are the opposing viewpoints of the songs featured?

7. Show VH1's 25 Greatest Protest Songs, segment 2. Have students continue completing their "Protest Song Reference Sheet" while watching.

8. Pause the program after Patty Smith. Check for understanding by asking the students what Smith proposes they do. Remind students that protest songs come in all genres, and the next song should be listened to in the same manner as the previous ones for content (the images and content are vastly different from the previous songs). Continue showing the program with "The Message."

9. Have students work with their song groups to discuss the song within the context of the three questions listed above. Students share their responses with the class.

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Lesson 4

Independent Studies Assignments

1. Design a multimedia project (i.e. PowerPoint) or original artwork (collage, painting, or pen & ink) that reflects your support or opposition to an issue discussed in one of the songs in the program segment. Be prepared to explain the significance of the project or artwork in relation to your topic.

2. Read the lyrics for “BIKO” and watch Peter Gabriel’s live performance of this song at the 1986 Amnesty International Conspiracy of Hope Tour on YouTube at the following web address: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iLg-8Jxi5aE

3. Steven Biko was a South African Freedom Fighter who was jailed because of his work and died there under “mysterious circumstances.” Read the attached biography of Stephen Bantu (Steve) Biko.

4. A Ballad is a song that tells a story, usually about people, animals, events, etc. The song "BIKO," by Peter Gabriel, can be considered a ballad since it tells the story of South African Freedom Fighter Steven Biko. Brainstorm a list of individuals, present or past, who were involved in protest and social uprising. Your list may include individuals such as:
   - Ruby Bridges
   - Dred Scott
   - Marian Anderson
   - Malcolm X
   - Dolores Huerta
   - Cesar Chavez
   - Ella Baker,
   - Ghandi,
   - Sojourner Truth,
   - and Nelson Mandela.

   I encourage you to use the library and/or Internet for further research.

5. Choose a person from your list who has fought for a particular cause, and complete the following activities:
   a. Collect facts about this person.
   b. Write a ballad, at least 10 lines long, about this person.
   c. Proofread and edit your ballad.
Choose and research a person who has been involved in protest and social uprising. This person may have been accursed or a crime and imprisoned unjustly because of their protest. They may be a historical figure, or living today. Take notes using the worksheet below and use them to create a ballad based on the situation of this person.

Subject's name: __________________________________________________________

The reason for protest: _________________________________________________

Type of protest (march, sing, publish materials, make speeches, etc.): __________

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

What is the historical or social context of the protest? _______________________

________________________________________________________________________

Where did the protest occur (in a factory, in the street, etc.)? ________________

________________________________________________________________________

What was the outcome of the protest (imprisonment, death, etc.)? ______________

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Write a ballad about this person using the following format as a guide. Remember to proofread and edit!

The Ballad of (name of person)
(John) fought for justice
(John) fought for right
(John) (type of protest [i.e. marched, sang, wrote, etc.]) with all of (his/her) might.
(He/She) fought in the (place)
(He/She) fought night and day,
Til finally (solution) came
And it ended that way.
Now create a ballad using these facts, but in your own format.
Lesson 4

"BIKO"
Peter Gabriel

September '77
Port Elizabeth weather fine
It was business as usual
In police room 619
Oh Biko, Biko, because Biko
Oh Biko, Biko, because Biko
Yihla Moja, Yihla Moja
- The man is dead

When I try to sleep at night
I can only dream in red
The outside world is black and white
With only one colour dead
Oh Biko, Biko, because Biko
Oh Biko, Biko, because Biko
Yihla Moja, Yihla Moja
- The man is dead

You can blow out a candle
But you can't blow out a fire
Once the flames begin to catch
The wind will blow it higher
Oh Biko, Biko, because Biko
Yihla Moja, Yihla Moja
- The man is dead

And the eyes of the world are
watching now
watching now

Lyrics courtesy of: www.lyricsondemand.com/p/petergabriellyrics/bikolyrics.html
Lesson 4

Biography: Stephen Bantu (Steve) Biko
Founder and martyr of the Black Consciousness movement in South Africa

Date of birth: 18 December 1946, King William's Town, Eastern Cape, South Africa
Date of death: 12 September 1977, Pretoria prison cell, South Africa

From an early age Steve Biko showed an interest in anti-Apartheid politics. After being expelled from his first school, Lovedale, in the Eastern Cape for 'anti-establishment' behaviour, he was transferred to a Roman Catholic boarding school in Natal. From there he enrolled as a student at the University of Natal Medical School (Black Section).

Whilst at medical school Biko became involved with the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS). But the union was dominated by white liberals and failed to represent the needs of black students, so Biko resigned in 1969 and founded the South African Students' Organisation (SASO). SASO was involved in providing legal aid and medical clinics, as well as helping to develop cottage industries for disadvantaged black communities.

In 1972 Biko was one of the founders of the Black Peoples Convention (BPC) working on social upliftment projects around Durban. The BPC effectively brought together roughly 70 different black consciousness groups and associations, such as the South African Student's Movement (SASM), which played a significant role in the 1976 uprisings, the National Association of Youth Organisations (NAYO), and the Black Workers Project (BWP) which supported black workers whose unions were not recognised under the Apartheid regime. Biko was elected as the first president of the BPC and was promptly expelled from medical school. He started working full time for the Black Community Programme (BCP) in Durban which he also helped found.

In 1973 Steve Biko was 'banned' by the Apartheid government. Under the 'ban' Biko was restricted to his home town of Kings William's Town in the Eastern Cape - he could no longer support the BCP in Durban, but was able to continue working for the BPC - he helped set up the Zimele Trust Fund which assisted political prisoners and their families. (Biko was elected Honorary President of the BPC in January 1977.)

Biko was detained and interrogated four times between August 1975 and September 1977 under Apartheid era anti-terrorism legislation. On 21 August 1977 Biko was detained by the Eastern Cape security police and held in Port Elizabeth. From the Walmer police cells he was taken for interrogation at the security police headquarters. On 7 September "Biko sustained a head injury during interrogation, after which he acted strangely and was uncooperative. The doctors who examined him (naked, lying on a mat and manacled to a metal grille) initially disregarded overt signs of neurological injury."

By September 11, Biko had slipped into a continual, semi-conscious state and the police physician recommended a transfer to hospital. Biko was, however, transported 1,200 km to Pretoria - a 12-hour journey which he made lying naked in the back of a Land Rover.
Lesson 4
A few hours later, on 12 September, alone and still naked, lying on the floor of a cell in the Pretoria Central Prison, Biko died from brain damage.

The South African Minister of Justice, James (Jimmy) Kruger initially suggested Biko had died of a hunger-strike and said that his death "left him cold". The hunger strike story was dropped after local and international media pressure, especially from Donald Woods, the editor of the East London Daily Dispatch. It was revealed in the inquest that Biko had died of brain damage, but the magistrate failed to find anyone responsible, ruling that Biko had died as a result of injuries sustained during a scuffle with security police whilst in detention.

The brutal circumstances of Biko's death caused a worldwide outcry and he became a martyr and symbol of black resistance to the oppressive Apartheid regime. As a result, the South African government banned a number of individuals (including Donald Woods) and organisations, especially those Black Consciousness groups closely associated with Biko. The United Nations Security Council responded by finally imposing an arms embargo against South Africa.

Biko's family sued the state for damages in 1979 and settled out of court for R65,000 (then equivalent to $25,000).

The three doctors connected with Biko's case were initially exonerated by the South African Medical Disciplinary Committee. It was not until a second enquiry in 1985, eight years after Biko's death, that any action was taken against them. The police officers responsible for Biko's death applied for amnesty during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings which sat in Port Elizabeth in 1997. The Biko family did not ask the Commission to make a finding on his death.

"The Commission finds that the death in detention of Mr Stephen Bantu Biko on 12 September 1977 was a gross human rights violation. Magistrate Marthinus Prins found that the members of the SAP were not implicated in his death. The magistrate's finding contributed to the creation of a culture of impunity in the SAP. Despite the inquest finding no person responsible for his death, the Commission finds that, in view of the fact that Biko died in the custody of law enforcement officials, the probabilities are that he died as a result of injuries sustained during his detention."*


Courtesy of: http://africanhistory.about.com/library/biographies/blbio-stevebiko.htm
Lesson 5

Music is…

A Catalyst for Social Change: Part Three

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Analyze the lyrics of protest songs as a catalyst for social change (1.4, 4.3).
- Discuss the influence of music on behavior (4.4).
- Demonstrate the use of music as a means of self-expression (2.6, 1.5)

Materials

VHS VCR Player
Television
VH1’s Greatest Protest Songs (Cable in the Classroom edited version)
Copies of Song Lyric Analysis worksheet

Procedures

1. Students present their multimedia project or original artwork to the class. Students discuss the significance of their project as it relates to the support or opposition to an issue discussed in a song chosen from segment two of the video program.

2. Discuss students’ responses to song, video and biography about Steve Biko. Remind students that a ballad is a song that tells a story, usually about people, animal, events, etc.

3. Students share their protest ballads with the class. Before the students read their ballads, they must explain the following information:
   a. Subject’s name
   b. Their reason for protest
   c. Type of protest
   d. Where did the protest occur?
   e. What was the outcome of the protest?

4. Write the word “revolution” on the board. Ask students to define the word. Write all of their answers on the board. Acknowledge all answers, but look for words such as “change” and “uprising.” Have students explain how the word

Adapted from vh1musicstudio.com
Lesson 5

“revolution” differs from “protest,” and briefly relate the word to historical revolutions such as the American Revolution.

5. Explain to students that they are about to watch a segment of the program that focuses on revolutions. The songs are all calls to action by the artists to change a particular system.

6. Show VH1’s 25 Greatest Protest Songs, segment 3. Have students continue completing their “Protest Song Reference Sheet” while watching.

Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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Adapted from vh1musicstudio.com
Lesson 5

Independent Studies Assignments

Songs are heard on the radio, on television, on CDs, etc. The words or lyrics of these songs are often poetry of a special kind. They may be rhymed or unrhymed, serious or amusing. They often, however, are written to inform the listener about social conditions in society. This activity will help to analyze or look closely at the meaning of the lyrics of a particular song.

1. Choose one of the songs discussed in this program segment. Find a copy of the lyrics, either at the library or on a Web site such as www.lyricsondemand.com. It may be necessary to read the lyrics more than once to fully understand them. Complete the attached worksheet and return it by the next class meeting.

2. Create a collage of lyrics that focus on an event, theme or social issue from the past or present. You may use one genre of musical lyrics in your collage or you may stretch the theme across a variety of genres. You may also choose to examine music from another country (perhaps your country of origin) or any country that interests you. You may use the exploration of music as a vehicle for discovering more about the country. The genres of music include, but are not limited to: Top 40 Pop, Top 40 rock, Hip Hop, R & B, Soft Rock, Hard Rock/Metal, Alternative, Folk, Blues, Jazz, Country, Opera, Musicals, Oldies, Work songs, Music from various cultures & countries.

For example:

Blues: The lyrics of blues songs are a map of the emotions and social issues affecting the lives of African-Americans for the last century. Identify one issue for research and create a collage of blues songs that match the issue being discussed.

Opera/Musicals: Music is a mirror of life and culture. Songs can provide a window into the soul of the artist, tackle important issues or tell a story. Music serves a variety of functions and purposes in society, with opera and musicals usually falling into the storytelling role. Choose an example of a theme (comedic, tragic, etc.) and illustrate the theme with lyrics from various operas/musicals.

3. In preparation for next week’s lesson, go to the following websites and read about the Mexican Revolution. These sites focus on major events and important historical figures, including women, who fought in the Mexican Revolution.
   http://www.ic.arizona.edu/ic/mcbride/ws200/mex-jand.htm
   http://www.ic.arizona.edu/ic/mcbride/ws200/mex-davi.htm
   http://www.mexconnect.com/articles/2824-the-mexican-revolution-1910

Adapted from vh1musicstudio.com
Lesson 5

SONG LYRIC ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

1. What is the title of the song?

2. Who recorded the song?

3. Who wrote the lyrics?

4. In your own words, explain what the lyrics are about. Be specific in explaining the protest topic, or message.

5. What are some of the strong words used to convey the message of this song? (Look for verbs and adjectives with the nouns they modify.)

6. If you could choose another title for this song, what would it be?

7. What is the musical genre of this song?

Adapted from vh1musicstudio.com
Lesson 6

Music is…

The Voice of Revolution: Part One

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Analyze the Porfirio Diaz regime in Mexico and Diaz's ties to the United States as expressed through music (3.2).
- Read a *corrido* about life under the Diaz regime in an attempt to gain a deeper understanding of the effects of a dictatorship on individuals (4.2, 4.3, 4.4).
- Analyze *corridos* that provide a greater understanding of tensions among revolutionary leaders who sought the presidency (1.4, 1.5, 1.6).

Materials:

- “Breaking News” information sheet
- “What is a Corrido?” information sheet
- "Tiempos Amargos" (Bitter Times) lyrics
- Computer with Internet access and speakers
- “El Cuartelazo” (The Coup d’Etat) (Part 1) lyrics
- “Corrido Historia Y Muerte del Gral. Francisco Villa” lyrics

Procedures:

1. Divide students into groups of 4-5 students. Allow time for students to share and discuss the questions answered on their Song Lyric Analysis worksheet with their group. Allow students volunteers to present their findings to the entire class.

2. Students discuss with the class their collage of lyrics. Discussion may include information about a country or specific culture the student explored or an event, theme or social issue that is presented in the collage. Students hang their collage of lyrics on the Lyrics Wall in the classroom.

3. Divide students into groups of five, and number the students in each group 1 through 5. Those who are assigned number 1 will be given some very important news that must be delivered to student number 5. Before student 5 can hear the news, it must travel from student 1-5, without writing anything down—like the game "Telephone."

4. Remind students that important news was spread by word of mouth before newspapers were widely printed and distributed. Explain that people remembered Adapted from www.artsedge.org: Corridos
Lesson 6

details of a particular event by writing a song. Explain we could each sing along to a number of different songs without looking at the lyrics, but would have a hard time reciting the same amount of stories by memory. Tell students that the *corrido*, a particular type of song developed in Mexico in the 1800s and still popular today, was often used to transmit information about current events.

5. Pass out the *What is a Corrido?* information sheet and discuss the characteristics of the *corrido* form. Tell students that they will be looking at corridos that provide information about the dictatorship of Mexican president Porfirio Diaz and other key figures during the Mexican Revolution. Pass out lyrics to the *corrido* "Tiempo Amargos" (Bitter Times). Play an excerpt of the *corrido* for your class at: http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/3772/corridos.swf.

6. Tell students that "Tiempo Amargos" reveals just how awful people were treated under Diaz's regime. Review the reasons why most of the population was living in poverty while only a few in powerful positions were wealthy (i.e., Diaz's ties to U.S. corporations). Ask students for examples of feelings of injustice apparent from the *corrido* lyrics. Ask students what the symbol of "pants" signifies in the lyrics. Discuss how the act of buttoning someone else's pants reflects how oppressed the people were under the Diaz regime.

7. Discuss what students can learn from a song that they might not be able to learn from a history textbook (i.e., personal narratives that might include emotional responses to then-current events) and why this may provide a greater understanding for the effects of significant historical events such as war.

### Assessment

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Adapted from www.artsedge.org: Corridos
Lesson 6

Independent Studies Assignments

1. Read: "El Cuartelazo" (The Coup d'Etat) (Part I), a corrido about revolutionary leader Francisco Madero who successfully defeated Diaz in 1911 and was elected president. Answer the following questions:
   a. Can you detect any bias in the corrido? (Focus on the 8th and 9th stanzas of the poem if you need help.)
   b. How does personal bias affect the re-telling of history?
   c. How there are at least two sides to every war and to every story?

   Note: After Madero became president, he was challenged by both Francisco Villa and Emiliano Zapata. Zapata controlled the state of Morelos, where he took matters into his own hands and divided land among the peasants, thereby ousting the estate owners. Both Zapata and Madero were assassinated, in 1917 and 1913, respectively. Political instability continued after Victoriana Huerta's coup d'etat against Huerta in 1913 and through Venustiano Carranza's presidency, which began when he overthrew Huerta in 1913. Play the excerpt of this corrido at ArtsEdge Look-Listen-Learn resource, Corridos at: http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/3772/corridos.swf.

2. Read the lyrics to “Corrido Historia Y Muerte del Gral. Francisco Villa,” a corrido about the legendary Mexican revolutionary leader Francisco Villa who attempted to overthrow Porfirio Diaz. Play an excerpt of the recording (http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/3772/corridos.swf.) and note the less-than-perfect sound quality of the recording. The recording was made on August 31, 1923, just sixty days after Francisco Villa's assassination-certainly a corrido about a then-current event. Answer the following questions:
   a. Did you learn more about Francisco Villa from the corrido than from the previous readings?
   b. What did you learn about Francisco Villa?
   c. Villa is represented as an infallible hero in this corrido. Remember that Villa was the leader of one of several factions who were fighting for presidential control. Many corridos have commemorated a particular leader (such as former U.S. President John F. Kennedy) with just as much praised as the corrido about Villa. Can you point out instances in the corrido that reveal one-sided opinions? Please be specific.

Adapted from www.artsedge.org: Corridos
Breaking News!

Extra! Extra! This just in! Porfirio Diaz has done it again! He sold another oil field to an American corporation in collusion with the Mexican elite. The rich are getting richer, the poor are getting poorer. Ninety percent of the people are living in poverty. Meanwhile, the textile workers who were on strike were met by the brute force of Diaz’s men. Reports reveal massive bloodshed. We’ll report more on the Rio Blanco textile strike as we find out more information.
Lesson 6

What is a Corrido?

The corrido is a musical form developed in Mexico during the 1800s and originally sung throughout the country. Although still popular in Mexico, over time it became known as “musica de la frontera” (border music) because it was especially popular along both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. This musical-poetic form continues to be popular wherever Mexicans and Mexican Americans live.

Language: The following elements characterize the language in corridos:
• Corridos are stories told in poetic form and sung to simple, basic music, much like English ballads.
• Corridos use common, everyday language.
• Although traditional corridos were always in Spanish, in recent years some have appeared in English as well, or have mixed the two languages.
• The audience, if addressed is always addressed politely.
• The tone can vary from sincere to satirical.

Structure: The stories that corridos tell, either fictional or historical, must be sung in the vernacular language of the people in order to be remembered (whether in English, Spanish or a mixture.) There is some variation in the poetic form, but most corridos have the following structure:
• 36 lines (6 stanzas of 6 lines each or 9 stanzas of 4 lines each)
• 7 to 10 syllables per line (sometimes the lines are repeated)
• Rhyme scheme that varies but most commonly uses an ABCBDB form in a six-line stanza or ABCB in a four-line stanza. (Sometimes couplets are used: AABB.)
• By tradition, the first stanza provides a setting for the story by either giving a specific date or naming a place.

Content: The traditional historical corrido told about actual events, especially the exploits of famous heroes or the tragic deaths of individuals fighting unjust authorities. When corridos became more commercially exploitable, some became mostly fictional. Today, a corrido can be about almost anything. These are some of the popular subjects:
• animals (such as racehorses or roosters)
• tragic love affairs
• criminal dealings, especially with contraband and smuggling
• migration and migrant labor
• social and political events
• the struggles of everyday life along the border
• assassinations or other violent deaths
• humorous occurrences or relationships
• catastrophes
• hometowns and regions
• miraculous events
• wars and revolutions
• local or national heroes
Lesson 6

“Tiemos Amargos” (Bitter Times)

Oh, how pleasant it is to live
During these times of today.
We are the agraristas,
though some people still doubt it.

These are no longer the times of Porfirio (Díaz),
when they cried for the master
when they’d meet him, they’d shake his hand,
and button his pants.

If one day the steward
became angry with a worker
it was because there was another one
closer to the snaps of his pants.

If someone had pretty daughters
he’d get a job as a night watchman,
or else he’d land a good job,
at least as a payroll clerk.

If someone had a pretty wife
they didn’t let him rest,
they’d get them up very early
to work just like the oxen.

I bid you farewell, friends,
you’ll forgive my frankness.
I’ve sung about the bitter times
under the Porfiristas.

Ay, qué contentos hemos llegadoa estos
tiempos que ahora se ven!
Nosotros semos los agraristas,
varios amigos que ni lo creen.

Ya no es el tiempo del porfirista,
que antes lloraban por el patrón,
que lo encontraban, le dan la mano,
y le abrochaban el pantalón.

Y si algún día el mayordomo
se desgustaba con algún peón
era porque otro andaba mas cerca
a los remaches del pantalón.

Y el que tenía hijas bonitas
ahi se la daban de velador,
or se granjeaban muy buena chamba
o cuando menos de rayador.

El que tenía mujer bonita
no lo dejaban ni descansar,
los levantaban muy de mañana
como a los bueyes a trabajar.

Ya me despido de mis amigos
ahi me dispensan la indiscreción,
tiempos amargos del porfirista
que aquí les canto en mi canción.
Lesson 6

“Corrido Historia Y Muerte del Gral. Francisco Villa”

Part 1

En una hacienda en la sierra,
de México maravilla,
de un labrador de mi tierra
nació el gran general Villa.

Trabajó por mantener
a su madre y a su hermana
y luchó por obtener
de trabajador la fama.

Pero el hijo del patrón,
con su dinero y poder,
burló a la hermana del peón
que al fin era una mujer.
Pero Pancho era muy hombre,
y en prueba de su valor,
lavó con sangre su nombre
malhiriendo al burlador.

A las fuertes de Madero
entró con brazo potente
y aquel humilde ranchero
fue un indomable insurgente.
Por su valor sobrehumano,
y fiera sin igual,
don Pancho le dió en Rellano
el grado de general.

Mas sus más valientes soldados
fueron su escolta y su corte:
los indomables dorados
de la División del Norte.

Mas por una imprevisión,
o tracción de algún canalla,
perdió la brillante acción
del combate de Celaya.

In a hacienda in my country,
marvelous México,
from a worker of the land
the great General Villa was born.

He worked to support
his mother and sister,
and aspired to be known
as a good worker.

But the son of the boss,
with money and power,
seduced the peon’s sister,
who, as a woman, was helpless.
But Pancho was truly a man
and, proving his courage,
cleared his name with blood,
badly wounding the seducer.

He joined Madero’s forces
with a strong hand,
and the once lowly farmworker
became an undefeated rebel.
Due to his extraordinary bravery
and unsurpassed fierceness,
at Rellano Don Pancho (Madero)
promoted him to the rank of general.

His most courageous soldiers
were his elite guard:
the indefectible dorados
of the Northern Division.

Yet an unforeseen incident,
or the treachery of a scoundrel,
caused him to lose his brilliant campaign
in the battle of Celaya.

Adapted from www.artedge.org: Corridos
Fue temerario y valiente
y noble de corazón
y admitió a toda su gente
al Presidente Obregón.
Como pago a sus proezas
le dieron el Canutillo,
la hacienda que manejaba
con su secretario Trillo.

Pero la envidia y traición,
que se arrastraba escondida,
esperaba la ocasión
para arrancarle la vida.

Y muy cerca del Parral,
sin descubrir aún el móvil,
mataron al General
que iba guiando su automóvil.

Mas no tuvieron valor
para enfrentarse al caudillo,
y disparando a traición
también mataron a Trillo.

Le lloraron sus soldados
pues él era su esperanza
y los valientes dorados
juraron tomar venganza.

Solo así podían vencer
a ese valiente caudillo
que con temor le llamaban
el señor de Canutillo.

Duerme en paz porque tu nombre
cual astro en la historia brilla:
será inmortal el renombre
del general Pancho Villa.


Adapted from www.artsedge.org: Corridos
“El Cuartelazo” (The Coup d’Etat) (Part 1)

Mil nuevecientos once,  
veintidós de febrero,  
en la capital de México  
mataron a Madero.

A las cinco de la mañana  
fue el primer cañonazo,  
ésa fue la contraseña  
para dar el cuartelazo.

Daba el reloj ese día  
las siete de la mañana  
cuando a México llegó,  
Mondragón con fuerza armada.

Llegó don Félix Díaz  
con orden militar:  
―Renuncias de la silla  
o te mando asesinar.—

Le respondió Madero  
en su silla presidencial:  
―Primero me asesinas,  
que tú me hagas renunciar.—

Madero, estando en palacio,  
dijo: ¡—Qué ingrata es mi suerte!  
¡Doy la vida por el pueblo,  
yo no le temo a la muerte!—

Madero les contestó:  
―No presento mi retiro;  
yo no me hice presidente,  
fue por el pueblo elegido.—

Señores, les contraré  
lo que en México pasó:  
que una bola de asesinos  
a Madero asesinó.

Madero ya murió,

Adapted from www.artsedge.org: Corridos
Lesson 6

y está debajo la tierra,
y ya nomás quedó Carranza
de Administrador de Guerra.

and buried down below,
only Carranza is left
as Minister of War.

Llegó la artillería,
conducida por un tren,
porque iban a bombardear
la cárcel de Belén.

The artillery arrived
transported by train,
they were going to attack
the jail of Belen.

Tocaban los clarines,
sonaban los tambores,
y andaba el cañón niño
por los alrededores.

The bugles were calling
and the drums were playing and the
canon niño
was placed nearby.

Source: Lyrics of “El Cuartelazo” by an unknown composer. Reprinted from the CD The Mexican Revolution: Corridos about the Heroes and Events 1910-1920 and Beyond! (CD 7041-7044)
Courtesy of Arhoolie Records (http://www.arhoolie.com).
Music is…

The Voice of Revolution: Part Two

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Write an original corridos based on the traditional form (2.6, 3.4)
- Compose music and melody to accompany an original corridos (2.1, 2.4, 2.7)
- Research a current event as the basis for subject matter for their corridos (5.1)
- Write three diary entries discussing your thoughts, fears and feelings about creating and performing your original corrido.

Materials

Tips on Writing a Corrido
There’s a Song in Everyone: Composing a Corrido
Computers with Internet access

Procedures

1. Review the corrido, “El Cuartelazo” and share students’ responses to the following questions: Can you detect any bias in the corrido? How does personal bias affect the re-telling of history? How are there at least two sides to every war and every story?

2. Review the corrido, “Corrido Historia Y Muerte del Gral. Francisco Villa” and discuss students’ responses to the following questions: Did you learn more about Francisco Villa from the corrido than from the previous readings? What did you learn about Francisco Villa? Can you point out instances in the corrido that reveal one-sided opinions?

3. Tell students that they will now become corridistas (composers of corridos). Read and discuss aloud Tips on Writing a Corrido.

4. Brainstorm a list of current events that are pertinent to students’ lives. Allow students time to write down a list of possible topics that they could translate into their own corrido.

5. Inspire students by sharing corridos written by fellow high school students. Recent winners of the annual Bilingual Corrido Contest in Arizona, a program

Adapted from: www.artsedge.org: Corridos
Lesson 7

conducted by the University of Arizona Poetry Center, wrote about current political and personal events. Corridos can be found at: www.artsedge.org.

Lesson: Corridos of the Mexican Revolution

6. Read aloud: There’s a Song in Everyone: Composing a Corrido. Discuss ways that students can write melodies (instrumental or vocal) to accompany their original corrido.

7. If time permits, allow students time to research their chosen current event on the Internet, gathering information pertinent to the creation of their corrido.

Assessment

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Adapted from: www.artsedge.org: Corridos
Lesson 7

Independent Studies Assignment

1. Review the ideas you brainstormed for your original corrido and choose a current event to write about. Create your own lyrics based on the guidelines: Tips on Writing a Corrido.

2. Choose a musical instrument and compose/perform and a simple chord progression to accompany the lyrics to your corrido. Create your own accompaniment based on: There’s a Song in Everyone: Composing a Corrido

3. Take a risk and write a melody to accompany the lyrics and music to your own corrido. Be prepared to participate in the corrido concert during our next class session. We will be reading, singing and performing our own corridos.

4. Next week, we will be learning about a composer through his diary entries. This week, you will respond to the previous three assignments in the form of a diary entry. Include any thoughts, fears and feelings you have about creating and performing your corrido. Remember: When writing a diary entry, always include the date at the top of the page and write in the first person. Please write three diary entries this week.

Adapted from: www.artsedge.org: Corridos
Lesson 7

Tips on Writing a Corrido

The following guidelines will help you become a corridista, a corrido composer:

If you enjoy a story, others will too.
While the subject matter of traditional historical corridos centered on actual events, corridos today are written about everything from tragic love affairs and the struggles of everyday life to catastrophes, heroes and villains, and major social and political events. Find the subject that most interests you, and you'll not only be excited to write the corrido, you'll also get others excited to listen to it.

Practice good form.
The traditional corrido usually consists of 36 lines, and each line contains 7 to 10 syllables. Try drawing 36 horizontal lines on your paper (six 6-line stanzas or nine 4-line stanzas). Then draw nine vertical lines down the length of your paper; each square should hold one syllable. Draw these lines in pen, and write the first draft of your corrido in pencil. This way, you can erase any mistakes you make while keeping track of how many syllables and lines you've written.

Rules are meant to be broken.
Most celebrated artists in history broke away from expected conventions. Don't sacrifice what you think is the perfect word or image simply for the sake of sticking to the form. Be true to yourself, and honor the subject you want to write about. The goal of writing corridos is to communicate ideas or a story, so if an idea cannot be communicated in under 10 syllables, don't force it. Still, the best corridos are those that follow the traditional structure.

Starting out can be very easy.
In traditional corridos, the first stanza sets the scene by providing the time and location during which the story takes place. Many corridos also began with the storyteller addressing his/her listeners, such as "I am going to sing about..." or "This is the story of...". Sometimes writing the first line of a song is the hardest part, but if you imitate the traditional corridistas, the second stanza might be the greater challenge. In the corrido tradition, the words are most important; they tell the story, and the music is secondary.

Experiment with rhyme.
The rhyming patterns of the end rhymes in a stanza (rhyme schemes) vary from corrido to corrido, but the most common forms are ABCBDB in a six-line stanza or ABCB in a four-line stanza. Try these forms or create your own rhyme scheme. And don't stop at end rhyme. Try rhyming within the line (internal rhyme). Try using more complicated rhymes or off-rhymes. This will show your sophisticated use of language. Use a dictionary and thesaurus to help find words that best capture what you want to communicate.

What would poets do?
Corridos are very poetic. Think of your song lyrics as a poem and incorporate a few of the many techniques used by writers to create vivid and lyrical poetry. Experiment with repetition, alliteration, simile, metaphor, personification, and other tricks of the (poetry) trade, and your corrido will be a powerful piece of writing. (See Poets.org for more examples of corridos.)

Keep listeners on the edge of their seats.
Reflect on the stories you had trouble putting down or the movies you couldn't tear yourself away from. Notice how the writer or director waits until the end to reveal how an event resolves or what happens to a main character. Consider building suspense throughout your corrido by waiting until the last or second-to-last stanza to provide a resolution to your story.

Write it like you say it.
Historically, corridos have reflected public opinion and were written so that they can be remembered. As a result, corridos are written in the everyday language of the people. Use the language and vocabulary that comes naturally to you even if it means using slang words, colloquial expressions, or a mixture of two different languages.

Adapted from: www.artsedge.org: Corridos
Lesson 7

There’s a Song in Everyone: Composing a Corrido

Use a musical instrument that is suitable for the task.

Two of the top choices are: the acoustic guitar (steel or nylon string) or a keyboard instrument. Any instrument that is properly tuned and is easy to play may be used. Guitars work well, and traditionally have been the instrument of choice for accompanying corridos. A small keyboard is also a good choice since keyboards are commonly used to play corridos, especially in recordings of modern corridos. The choice of instrument is up to you and any instrument you play is the best instrument to use!

Use simple chord progression for songs.

In corridos, a 3-chord progression is typical. The I, IV, and V, chords (or notes) of a scale make up a 3-chord progression. The I chord is called the tonic (or the primary note) of the progression. The tonic is the first note of any scale. The IV and V chords are the 4th and 5th notes of the scale (as defined by the tonic or 1st note).

Let's say you use a G chord as the first chord; the IV chord is then a C major, and the V chord is a D7 major.

The 2-chord progression follows the same pattern, but uses only the I and V chords of the scale (i.e., if G is the 1st chord then D7 is the V chord).

Both the 2- and 3-chord progressions are simple progressions, but they are very powerful. Some of the greatest music has been written using these forms.

Write melodies that are easy to accompany using the 2- or 3-chord progression.

Melody writing is a difficult and very personal process. For the novice, experimentation will be the best route to take. You may prefer to write individually or in small groups. You may create a melody by picking out the notes on an instrument or by singing. Write a melody and then fit chords to the melody, but it may be easier to start by picking a chord progression and fitting or writing the melody to fit the chords. Either method works fine.

Keep things simple.

Putting words to music is extremely complicated. To become a songwriter requires knowledge, a strong desire to communicate, and lots of practice. If you keep things simple, and not get too technical, more interest and enthusiasm will develop and the experience will be fun. So keep things simple and enjoy the process.

Be positive and have a "never quit" attitude.

Have fun! You are in the process of composition. If something gets in your way, change the composition to get around roadblocks. If a song is not working, take a break and then review what is working with the song. Talk to your friends, your classmates and your family. Don’t give up. There is a song in everyone!

Adapted from: www.artsedge.org: Corridos
Lesson 8

Music is…

A Composition of Life

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Read, sing and perform original lyrics and compositions based on the traditional form of the corrido (2.1, 2.4, 3.4)
- Analyze and critically assess their personal participation in the song-writing process by discussing their experiences through written diary entries (4.1)
- Comprehend important facts and information about the life and music of Russian composer, Peter Illyich Tchaikovsky (3.2, 3.5)

Materials

Students’ lyrics, music and instruments for a Corrido Concert
Students’ diary entries
Tchaikovsky Discovers America by Susan Hammond
Various selections of Tchaikovsky’s music including The Nutcracker, Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty, and The 1812 Overture

Procedures

1. Class participates in a Corrido Concert. Students read, sing and perform original lyrics and compositions based on the traditional form of the corrido. Students discuss current events that inspired them to create the corrido.

2. Students share and discuss their feelings about the corrido assignment by reading their diary entries aloud.

3. Explain to students that they will be learning about a composer from Russia, Peter Illyich Tchaikovsky. Note that he lived from 1840 to 1893 and that he was probably the most popular 19th century Russian composer. He wrote such famous works as the ballets, Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty, and The Nutcracker. He also wrote The 1812 Overture.

4. Play examples of Tchaikovsky’s music while reading aloud the entire book, Tchaikovsky Discovers America. Explain to the students that this book tells about Tchaikovsky’s visit to America in 1891. Discuss that the format of the book is that of a diary. The diary entries in the book are supposed to have been written by

Adapted from: ArtsEdge.org – Tchaikovsky in America
Lesson 8

Eugenia (Jenny) Petroff, a fictional girl living in New York. Her parents came from Russia, but she and her brother were born in New York City. Note that Tchaikovsky, like Jenny, kept a diary.

Assessment

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Adapted from: ArtsEdge.org – Tchaikovsky in America
Lesson 8

Independent Studies Assignments

For years, Tchaikovsky was terrified to conduct. The following passage is a description of a concert ordeal that took place when Tchaikovsky was only 28 years old:

Reading One:
“The stance he took was grotesque. With one hand he grabbed his scraggy beard. With the other he held the baton, but the gestures he made with it were wild and uncontrolled: he did not appear to be looking at the score at all. The audience began to realize that there was no relation between his antics and what the orchestra was playing. The players were well rehearsed. Receiving nonsensical indications from the conductor, they took over the responsibility themselves, leaving Tchaikovsky to devote himself to his own task, which was nothing less than preventing his head from falling off” (Hammond, p. 35).

Reading Two:
“I am 51 today. I feel excited. The concert beings at two o’clock, with the Suite. This curious fright I suffer from is very strange. How many times have I already conducted the Suite and it goes splendidly? Why this anxiety? I suffer horrible, and it gets worse. I never remember feeling so anxious before. Perhaps it is because over here they pay so much attention to my outward appearance, and consequently, my shyness is more noticeable” (Hammond, p. 35).

Reading Three:
“I am ten times better known here than in Russia. Of all the people I have met, [the Americans] are the most generous and open hearted” (Hammond, p. 9).

On a separate piece of paper, complete the following:

1. Draw a sketch of Tchaikovsky conducting, using the description in Reading One.
2. Have you ever had a frightening thing happen to you? Describe it. What happened? Why was it frightening? Write a diary entry about this experience.
4. What do you do to get over your fears?
5. How was Tchaikovsky treated in America?
6. What did he think of Americans?
7. Were you born in a country other than America? If so, write a diary entry explaining how you have been received in America. Use specific examples.

Adapted from: ArtsEdge.org – Tchaikovsky in America
Lesson 9

Music is…

Diversity of Form & Rhythm

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Analyze and describe the use of classical music elements and meter in excerpts of *The Nutcracker Suite* by Tchaikovsky (1.4, 1.5).
- Compare and contrast their experience of immigration to America (from their own lives or the lives of their ancestor’s) with Tchaikovsky’s experience.
- Explore the history, form and musical elements of jazz music in the United States, focusing on musicians, Duke Ellington and Ella Fitzgerald (3.1, 3.3, 1.5, 1.6)

Materials

Computers for students with Internet access and speakers

Procedures

1. As students enter the room, play excerpts from *The Nutcracker Suite* through the computer found at: http://www.vspac.com/resources/nutcracker/index.html.

2. Allow time for students to share their sketch of Tchaikovsky conducting. Discuss Tchaikovsky’s fear of conducting and ask students to share situations that cause them fear and how they get over fears.

3. Discuss Tchaikovsky’s impression of America and how he was treated. Encourage students who were born in different countries to share their experience of how they were received in America and their experience of immigration.

4. Explain to students that they have been listening to *The Nutcracker Suite*, a popular ballet composed by Tchaikovsky in 1892. It tells the story of a young girl named Clara who anxiously awaits Christmas morning and spends the night dreaming of vivid scenes with wonderful characters. The musical movements of *The Nutcracker* reflect the scenes that Clara beholds. The one we will focus on is entitled "Waltz of the Flowers." "Waltz of the Flowers" is literally a waltz, meaning that the music is in 3/4 meter. In 3/4 meter, the first beat of each measure is accented, which lends to a dance-like quality in the music. Listen to this in the following excerpt, and think about which beats the strings are playing on. You can hear that the strings are playing on beats one and three. Beat three acts as a

Adapted from: www.smithsonianjazz.org
Lesson 9


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Independent Studies Assignments

1. Go the Smithsonian Jazz website and read: What is Jazz? Read the section: Overview of Jazz Music at http://www.smithsonianjazz.org/class/whatsjazz/wij_start.asp

2. Explore Duke Ellington at the Smithsonian Jazz website by choosing Duke’s Music Class at: http://www.smithsonianjazz.org/class/ellington/de_class_1.asp. Read: Story 1 - Duke Ellington, the Composer and listen to: Daybreak Express. This song is an example of program music, so use your imagination and pretend you’re on the train with Duke and his band. Complete the listening activities for this song.

3. Read: Story 2 – Duke Ellington, the Bandleader and listen to: Take the A Train. Listen for the ensemble of musicians as they were divided into three sections: brass, reeds, and percussion. People came from all over to come to Harlem to hear Duke Ellington perform.

4. Explore Ella Fitzgerald and her scat singing at the Smithsonian Jazz website by choosing Ella’s Singing Class at: http://www.smithsonianjazz.org/class/fitzgerald/ef_class_1.asp

5. Read: Stories 1 thru 4 – Ella Fitzgerald, completing the corresponding activities and listening to samples of her music. Pay attention to how Ella uses imaginative vocal sounds called “scat” to replace words. Listen to how she utilizes “call and response” and copies Roy Eldridge’s musical trumpet phrases with her voice.

6. Go to: http://www.smithsonianjazz.org/class/groovintojazz/groovin_12_15.asp Listen to two versions of Take the “A” Train. The first version is by Ella Fitzgerald with the Duke Ellington Orchestra. Listen to her improvise the first solo and then you will hear six trumpet players each play short solos. The first trumpet player is Clark Terry, and he is followed by Shorty Baker, Willie Cook, Cat Anderson, Dizzy Gillespie, and Ray Nance. Can hear the trumpet players change? Count 1,2,3,4 four times and if you listen really close you will hear them change. Ella comes back in and scats some more. She loved to imitate horns. What instrument do you think she might have been aiming for sounding like?

Adapted from: www.smithsonianjazz.org
Lesson 9

7. Now listen to the second version of Take the “A” Train by The Duke Ellington Orchestra with Oscar Peterson. Most jazz is in 4/4 time, which just means 4 steady beats that repeat. Jazz musicians improvised in different meters, most of the time in 4 but sometimes in other meters. A waltz is in 3/4, which means 3 steady beats repeating. Duke Ellington usually played his famous theme song in 4 but sometimes for fun would play it as a waltz and then change it back to 4. Listen to him start out in 3 and then switch to 4. Can you tell where that happens?

Learn more about Duke Ellington at:

http://www.dellington.org/
http://americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/aa/music/ellington
http://pbs.org/ellingtonsd/dukeEllington.htm
http://www.pbs.org/jazz/biography/artist_id_ellington_duke.htm
http://americanhistory.si.edu/events/elling/

Learn more about Ella Fitzgerald at:

http://redsugar.com/ella.html
http://www.pbs.org/jazz/biography/artist_id_fitzgerald_ella.html
http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/database/fitzgerald_e.html
http://americanhistory.si.edu/events/elling/
Lesson 10

Music is…
An Interpretation of Life and Culture

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Compare and contrast classical and jazz versions of the same song and compare genre, form, style and meter (1.4, 1.5, 1.6)

- Listen to aural examples of jazz music while discussing the history and musical achievements of jazz musicians, Ella Fitzgerald and Duke Ellington (3.1, 3.2, 3.5).

- Explore elements of jazz music including improvisation through literary devices, poetry and hip-hop music (1.6, 5.1)

- Analyze hip-hop music as a reflection of people’s life and culture throughout history (1.6, 3.1, 4.3)

Materials

Computer with Internet access and speakers
Recording of Waltz of the Flowers by Tchaikovsky
(http://prose-n-poetry.com/christmas_song/176)
Recording of Dance of the Floreadores by Duke Ellington
(http://www.smithsonianjazz.org/class/groovintojazz/groovin_12_15.asp)
Copies of “Slam, Dunk & Hook” by Yusef Komunyakaa
(available at http://liblio.org)
Copies of the poem, “Dream Boogie” by Langston Hughes
(available at http://pbskids.org/bigapplehistory/arts/topic10.html)

Procedures

1. Discuss with students the independent studies assignments related to: What is Jazz? (www.smithsonianjazz.org.) Discuss students’ responses to music activities about Duke Ellington and Ella Fitzgerald. Focus on Duke Ellington’s use of rhythm and meter and Ella Fitzgerald’s use of scat singing and improvisation.

2. Ask students to discuss the meter of the songs: Take the “A” Train by Ellington and Waltz of the Flowers by Tchaikovsky.
3. Ask students: If Duke Ellington were to create his own version of *Waltz of the Flowers* how might it sound different? Explain that Duke Ellington and his composer partner, Billy Strayhorn, decided to create jazz versions of music from the ballet, *The Nutcracker*. Play *Waltz of the Flowers* by Tchaikovsky then *Dance of the Floreadores* by Duke Ellington. While listening to both of the selections, students draw a Venn diagram while comparing and contrasting the two songs.

4. Ask: “Who remembers how to figure out what meter music is in, that is music you are listening to but not reading? How could we figure out what meter these two versions of *Waltz of the Flowers* are in? Duke Ellington loved to play around with taking music someone else wrote and changing it; people who do that are called arrangers. Tchaikovsky wrote the *Waltz of the Flowers* to be danced in 3 but Ellington thought it would be fun to change it around and make it in 4. It was no longer a waltz and so he named it *Dance of the Floreadores*."

5. Say: “Ella Fitzgerald’s songs are a great example of how a person can use his/her voice to improvise melodies over the accompanying instrumentation. *Improvisation* is a key component to jazz music. Generally, improvisation refers to creating and/or performing an artistic piece without preparation. Jazz musicians improvise by creating melodies that coincide with the chord structure of a tune. Writers may improvise by writing whatever comes to mind in a “stream of consciousness.”

6. Tell students that they will be playing a type of “stream of consciousness” game: Immediately after they read a line that contains a vivid image, they should write down the first line that comes to mind. This line should contain a vivid image that was triggered by the image contained in the previous line. Start the activity by writing a line that would conjure up a specific visual in students’ minds. Allow students to write and pass their paper until at least 8 lines have been written.

7. Students to share some of the collaborative poems they’ve just created. Discuss how the poems leap from image to image in imaginative yet correlative ways. What are the possible relationships between images written by two different people? Discuss how such leaps in imagery is a kind of *riffing*. In jazz, musicians may riff off of each other’s melody when improvising solos.
Lesson 10

Assessment

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Lesson 10

Independent Studies Assignments

1. Play any recording of jazz music found at the Kennedy Center’s Millennium Stage website. (Select the “Jazz” tab to view all jazz performances available.) Listen to the music while you complete the following writing exercise: Listen to the sounds you hear and “free write” whatever comes to mind based on the sounds for five minutes. It’s okay to make up your own words if it’s appropriate and don’t worry about making “logical” sense. Just write. Mimic the rhythm and sounds of jazz in poetry.

2. Read: Yusef Komunyakaa’s “Slam, Dunk & Hook” and Langston Hughes’s “Dream Boogie.” How did the poets use lyrics and words that reflect the characteristics of jazz music? Langston Hughes was a Harlem Renaissance writer and incorporated jazz and blues rhythms into his work. He wanted to embrace his African American heritage in ways avoided by many of his peers who wanted to gain success in the white literary world.

3. What do you think happens when jazz meets hip-hop? Most of you probably listen to specific hip-hop artists. Thinking about what you know about jazz and improvisation and what you know about hip-hop music, answer the following questions: What are ways the two kinds of music are similar? How are they different? If jazz was to combine with hip-hop how do you think it would sound? How would you describe hip-hop to someone who has never heard it before? Write down any words you can think of that would help describe the music, including words that may evoke certain rhythms or a driving beat.

4. Listen to a group called Digable Plants, a hip-hop group that was influenced by jazz. This song is called K.B.’s Alley. Listen and see if your predictions about the way the music might sound are true for this recording. Go to: http://www.smithsonianjazz.org/class/groovintojazz/groovin_12_15.asp

5. Hip-hop music began as an artistic expression for black, urban youth and has come to be accepted and created by people all over the world. It expresses political, social and personal struggles and has become a way to communicate dissatisfaction with society and a call for action and change. Read the following quote from Damon Dash, CEO of Roc-A-Fella Records: “Hip-hop depicts a lifestyle, you know, just reports what’s going on. And people can understand the struggle through the music. It’s not just the music.” Find an example of hip-hop music that discusses a specific theme or message. Be prepared to demonstrate how the song is a reflection of the history/culture of the time period.

Good morning, daddy!
Ain't you heard
The boogie-woogie rumble
Of a dream deferred?

Listen closely:
You'll hear their feet
Beating out and Beating out a --

You think
It's a happy beat?

Listen to it closely:
Ain't you heard
something underneath
like a --

What did I say?

Sure,
I'm happy!
Take it away!

Hey, pop!
Re-bop!
Mop!

Y-e-a-h!
Lesson 10

Slam, Dunk, & Hook
Yusef Komunyakaa

Fast breaks. Lay ups. With Mercury's
Insignia on our sneakers,
We outmaneuvered to footwork
Of bad angels. Nothing but a hot
Swish of strings like silk
Ten feet out. In the roundhouse
Labyrinth our bodies
Created, we could almost
Last forever, poised in midair
Like storybook sea monsters.
A high note hung there
A long second. Off
The rim. We'd corkscrew
Up & dunk balls that exploded
The skullcap of hope & good
Intention. Lanky, all hands
& feet...sprung rhythm.
We were metaphysical when girls
Cheered on the sidelines.
Tangled up in a falling,
Muscles were a bright motor
Double-flashing to the metal hoop
Nailed to our oak.
When Sonny Boy's mama died
He played nonstop all day, so hard
Our backboard splintered.
Glistening with sweat,
We rolled the ball off
Our fingertips. Trouble
Was there slapping a blackjack
Against an open palm.
Dribble, drive to the inside,
& glide like a sparrow hawk.
Lay ups. Fast breaks.
we had moves we didn't know
We had. Our bodies spun
On swivels of bone & faith,
Through a lyric slipknot
Of joy, & we knew we were
Beautiful & dangerous.

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Chapter 4

SUMMARY

The preceding sequence of activities and lessons encourage high school students to think critically about the connection between culture and music. The lessons in this project represent ten weeks of the expected 16-week program. However, the issues and ideas presented in the lessons can be expanded across a longer period of time in order to allow students the opportunity to gain an in-depth view of each topic. The author highlights the thematic connections between the literature review and lesson plans below.

Conclusions

In recent years, schools have been pressured by financial shortages and political policies to downsize or eliminate VAPA instruction (Woodworth et al., 2007; Music for All, 2004). This project demonstrates that there are materials and resources available to create a music course that is standards-based, multicultural and dynamic. The author used the California VAPA standards as the foundation for the course, while creating and adapting lessons that focus on student-centered, multicultural activities. This project illustrates that it is possible to create a curriculum that meets state standards while addressing the personal, cultural needs of the students.

In order to promote democracy in the classroom, music instruction needs to be flexible and connected to the lives of the students (Cuban & Tyack, 1995; Ecker, 1990). It is also necessary to counteract narrowed, Eurocentric curriculum by integrating non-mainstream content in order for learning to be connected to students’ identities (Banks, 2001). With those ideals in mind, the author created the first lesson emphasizing the
connection between music and students’ history and culture. Lesson 1 focuses on the interests of the students by asking them complete a survey that encourages them to explore and discuss their personal experiences with music. Students also examine the ways in which music overlaps aspects of their identities including race, gender, culture, class, personal history and language. Additionally, this lesson is centered on the multiculturalism that exists in local communities and empowers students to explore and share music that is valuable to their own identities. These activities promote a commitment that allows “both teachers and students to become critically aware of each other’s cultural perspectives” (Ecker, 1990, p. 19).

Through the study of music, children reach an understanding of issues that bond us as human beings (Belgarian, 1991; Brown, 1995). In Lesson 1, students explore how music has been an integral part of how all people communicate their responses, perceptions and understanding of the world. In Lessons 3, 4 and 5, students discover the ways in which people worldwide have used music as a means of protest to social injustice, oppression and disenfranchisement. In Lesson 4, students research a person who has been involved in protest and social uprising and create a ballad based on their findings. In Lesson 3, students have the opportunity to research issues that concern them in their school and community. They write song lyrics, a poem, or a song to state their protest message and share it with other members of the class. Students understand that there is multiple ways of viewing the same topic while the activities connect the concepts to the lives of the students. The course provides students an authentic voice that allows
them to discover the struggles and triumphs of the human race (Belgarian, 1991; Brown, 1995; Seeger, 1992).

Cultural relevance is a key component in this music program because it encourages students to tap into their unique home culture during the learning process (Beglarian, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1994). During Lesson 2, students discuss and display words to a song on the Lyrics Wall that are important to their home culture. In Lesson 7, students research a current event that is pertinent to their lives and compose an original corridos. In Lesson 10, students find an example of hip-hop music that discusses a specific theme or message that is pertinent to their lives and demonstrate how the song is a reflection of the history and culture of the time period. Hence, a culturally relevant music course recognizes the value in students learning about themselves and others by listening, creating, studying and responding to music from around the world (Arce, 2004; Reed, 2005).

The author created this course recognizing the positive correlation between music education and increased self-esteem, motivation, engagement and academic achievement (Mazzarella, 1978; Mehuron, 1990; Roscigno & Southgate, 2009). In Lesson 2, students discuss how music can evoke feelings, moods and emotions by creating a soundtrack of their lives. They are encouraged to use their own personal experiences as a basis for this activity. When students are instruments of their own learning, they see themselves as achievers (Mazarella, 1978). The lessons in this project encourage students to see themselves as catalysts of change by focusing on topics of social justice, protest and revolution that are pertinent to the world and students’ local communities.
In conclusion, the creation of this course is an important step in providing high school independent studies students equitable opportunities to experience standardized music instruction. The author concentrated on the inclusion of multicultural music because it addresses the needs of independent studies students who come from families that represent all races, income brackets, political and religious affiliations (MENC, n.d. ¶2). In addition, the weekly classroom period brings together students from various communities in order to counteract learning that is often isolated due to the nature of the educational setting. Participating in a multicultural music program offers independent studies students more than an awareness of culture and music; it provides authentic voices that speak of the struggles and triumphs of the human race while giving every student a voice that is heard, respected and recognized (Beglarian, 1991; Chasalow, 1989; Ecker, 1990).

There are several areas that were not addressed in the previous chapters of this project that the author believes are critical components of this music curriculum. Foremost, it is imperative that children are given multiple opportunities to experience music making in their surrounding communities. This can best be accomplished through field trips to local theater companies, dance performances and music festivals that feature musicians from a variety of diverse backgrounds. These experiences are instrumental in fostering students’ cultural awareness and tolerance of musical variation (Seeger, 1992; Sheets, 1995). Furthermore, the addition of guest speakers from multiple cultural backgrounds with experience and education in any field of music prove to be a valuable resource for students in helping them achieve a cross-cultural understanding of people
from around the world (Seeger, 1992). Lastly, parental involvement and support is a positive asset to any program and could prove to be an invaluable resource as students explore the music of their home culture and those in their community.

Recommendations for Action & Further Research

The next stage of this process is for the author to implement the multicultural music program at Harrison Charter School during the following semester of the 2009-10 school year. The author recognizes that with any program that is being piloted, modifications will be made in order to adjust the course to the needs of the students. An important aspect of the learning process will include student surveys that will focus on ways to improve the course while identifying strengths and weaknesses of the program. In addition, a multicultural music course that focuses on independent studies students is a fairly new concept, so the author intends to share this information with charter school staff members and in a professional development seminar at the California Music Educators Association’s annual conference.

In the last decade, there has been a 44.2 percent increase in the number of students who participate in independent studies (Barrat & Berliner, 2009). Certainly, more time needs to be spent on research that focuses on the educational outcomes of these students and the ways in which schools can connect students’ home culture to standardized curriculum. There are a limited number of studies that have been conducted on independent studies students and these children need to be recognized as valuable assets to communities and the world as a whole. Furthermore, the impact of music
education needs further attention for students who are educated in non-traditional settings, such as home school and independent studies programs.

Reflections of the Author

When I arrived at Sacramento State University in the fall of 2005, I was eager to further my education and pursue a master’s degree from the Bilingual/Multicultural Education (BMED) department. The degree program appealed to me because my father was born in Italy and I knew firsthand about the struggles he encountered when he immigrated to the United States. As a first generation Italian-American, I begged my father to speak to me in his native tongue, but he refused due to his early experiences as an Italian student in American schools. Early on, he learned to avoid punishment by his teachers by only speaking English in the classroom. Growing up, I was fascinated with the culture and language of my father and sought out discover more about the connection between culture and education in the BMED program. In addition, I recognized that as an educator, I needed to develop knowledge and skills to work effectively with students from diverse racial, ethnic, social-class and language groups.

When I first began my journey in the master’s program, I had some understanding about the importance of connecting students’ culture to learning. However, as I progressed through the research process, I recognized that my students bring to the classroom a wealth of cultural knowledge and this can be a bridge for learning new information. As a result, I started looking at my students with a new set of eyes. I began to give them choices in their learning activities based on their individual needs and preferences. I also started questioning them about their home language and family, and I
began to integrate their own life experiences and culture with the material they were learning.

I always knew that music had a positive impact on my educational and personal growth. However, when I conducted research around the connection between culture, music and achievement, I was shocked to discover a vast number of studies that demonstrated how music education continues to have a positive impact on the lives of children. What fascinates me the most is the notion that no culture exists without music and therefore, music education can touch the lives of all the children I educate, regardless of their cultural background. As I studied the statistics on the decreasing number of students being educated in music, the information transformed me from educator to researcher to ultimately a music advocate. In fact, I have become so passionate about the importance of music in schools that I can see myself pursuing a career in music advocacy. Hence, I am starting my journey with the implementation of a high school multicultural music course at the charter school where I am presently employed.

This music project, combined with my coursework and research in the BMED department, has helped me view multicultural music education through a critical lens. I have come to an understanding that multiculturalism involves more than simply introducing children to music from around the world. It involves providing students multiple opportunities to experience another culture firsthand through their music, while learning how to empathize with their feelings and ideas. By teaching students about the historical and cultural context of music, they are able to attain an insider’s understanding of the culture.
I am blessed to live and teach in the Northern California region where diverse cultures live side by side and I intend to utilize this diversity to drive my music program. My students must also learn to live in a world that is diverse and I believe that my project is the start of a unifying force that can bring people together. Furthermore, I understand the importance of children seeing their own cultural music in the course as this promotes self-esteem, cultural pride and ultimately, democracy in the classroom. Undoubtedly, music is the perfect avenue to empower students artistically and culturally because “the arts, as manifestations of the human spirit, are visible, audible, tactile, and kinesthetic and therefore can make the world’s cultures uniquely present and concretely accessible to students for imaginative interpretation” (Ecker, 1990, p. 14). I am eternally grateful that I have a career that involves the facets of life that I treasure the most – teaching, music and culture.
REFERENCES


