

# **The Music of New Orleans and How It Shaped Its Culture**

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## **Overview**

## **Rationale**

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## **Overview**

This unit is aimed to concentrate and New Orleans' culture, cuisine, and historical landmarks with significant importance placed on music and African-American influences in order to create a curriculum that provides an urban cultural contrast and comparison for students in the School District of Philadelphia.

The first goal of this unit is to give students a perceptive understanding of how music can help shape a culture, especially an urban landscape with similarities as well as differences to their own environment. We will understand the power and effect that music had and still has on the society in New Orleans. We will pay special attention to the role African Americans play in the musical history and current events of the Crescent City. The relationship between music and society in a specific urban community is what we will delve into.

Culture and the fundamentals of society have its roots in musical expression. Many of our traditions in the African-American community are formulated around music and the expression of music (i.e. dance). Music is also utilized as a communication

device in the African-American community as well. This is especially true when it comes to the culture and society of New Orleans. Many specific customs are infused in the history and urban landscape of the city. This unit will give students a comparison of an urban environment that is rich in culture and diversity as their own but has a different, yet complex set of issues as well and how music is at the center of that environment. This unit will include the different genres of the New Orleans metropolitan area, the importance of African-American music and musicians in that area and how their music and sound has shaped not only their city's culture but that of the country.

## **Rationale**

Music or different genres of music is one way a society can define themselves. In this unit we will take into consideration how music shapes a culture and society, particularly the African-American community in New Orleans. Music is at the forefront of many of our societal practices. Using this knowledge, we will assess how African-American music is vital to a society and how it is expressed in that society. The basis of this unit will encompass some of these social practices. For instance, students will view documentaries on the history of jazz in New Orleans. Many of my students are audio and visual learners and this is an effective learning device to help my students acquire knowledge about these subjects.

The use of exploration and inquiry will grant students awareness as to why music is important to the identity of New Orleans and its African-American community. We will analyze different genres of music popular to that area and ones that have historic ramifications as well. This unit will be composed of three lessons that showcase the ways music shapes culture and how that has effected the society in New Orleans. This unit will feature different activities for different learning styles within each lesson.

This unit will utilize various forms of technology and the internet to give students the tools and resources to be knowledgeable about the culture and music of New Orleans so they can be successful in completion of their lessons. These materials will be made accessible to the students during class time.

## **Objectives**

This unit is written for eleventh and twelfth grade students but may be incorporated into the curriculum of all secondary students. The students meet in class everyday for 45 minutes each class period during the semester. Some lessons require more than one class period to be completed. This unit is meant for social studies classes with an emphasis on using music to teach subtopics within the subject.

The theme of this unit will have the students investigate a city's culture through its musical heritage. The objective is to lead students and engage them in understanding

that music itself is an expression of one's culture. The students will have what is need to complete each lesson and activity available to the in class.

The objectives of this unit will be inclusive (but not limited to) of the following:

- Jazz is considered the one true American form of music. What is “Congo Square”? Explain it's influence on music and its magnitude of influence on the African-American community in New Orleans and the country.
- Class ball. Students will pretend they are in different roles of New Orleans' and our city's society. Students will pick different societal roles out of a bowl (i.e. upper class landowner's daughter, enslaved cook etc.). They will then collaborate with the rest of the class to plan a ball using the customs of the time and from each city (Philadelphia and New Orleans). What type of music and dances were considered the standard for a ball at this time in history? The students will document the process and explain what life is like for different societal roles during the early 1800's. Class and race played a huge part, but how? If you were free and black, in what ways were you truly “free”?
- Analyze how the the influx of African culture during the slave trade influence the shaping of the culture in New Orleans compared to the culture in our city. How did the influx effect the musical climate of the city? Write a five entry diary as a person living in pre-Civil War America who has visited both cities. What is the stark contrast that strikes you amongst the two cities?

## Strategies

The students will use different forms of multimedia to present the cumulative assignments of the unit.

- Analyze and comprehend the magnitude of the influence of African and Caribbean cultures in New Orleans.
- Develop an understanding of how prominent a role music plays in countering methods of societal oppression in the New Orleans' metropolitan area.
- Develop an understanding of the impact gentrification has in post-Katrina New Orleans and how local musicians are impacted by this process.

- Expand my students' knowledge about cultural traditions in another urban but historically significant environment.

## **Classroom Activities**

### Lesson 1: Introduction to New Orleans Culture through Jazz

*Objectives:* The students will be able to identify and analyze the origins of Jazz music and what is "Congo Square." The student will be able to explain its influence on music and its magnitude of influence on the African-American community in New Orleans and the country.

### *Materials/Resources:*

- Video segments of "Ken Burns Jazz"
- Video Worksheet
- Vocabulary list
- Jazz sound clips
- Computer

*Procedures:* The students and the teacher will engage in a discussion to assess their prior knowledge of New Orleans and of the genre of Jazz music. The students will receive a worksheet that corresponds with the teacher selected video clips of "Ken Burns' Jazz". The students will review a vocabulary list via PowerPoint or be given a vocab worksheet. The introduction to background knowledge will target specific points and be general in nature due to the amount of information needed and the audience. The students will listen to music featured in the documentary video clips.

*Strategies/Teaching Points:* The students will engage in discussions about the origins of Jazz and how it relates and is incorporated into the culture of New Orleans. They will envision the ways that music influences a culture. The students will delve into the study of music and its place in society.

*Closing Activity:* The students will review the information gained from the documentary and the class discussions. The student will explore the culture and climate of New Orleans at that time and create a journal entry as a teenager living in that period and how music shaped their activities. This lesson should take two to three class periods.

## Lesson 2: Music from Africa to New Orleans

*Objectives:* The students will analyze how the the influx of African culture during the slave trade influence the shaping of the culture in New Orleans compared to the culture in our city. How did this influx effect the musical climate of the city?

*Materials/Resources:*

- Video segments of “Ken Burns Jazz”
- Video Worksheet
- Vocabulary list
- Jazz sound clips
- Computer

*Procedures:* The students will research about the enslaved and free black populations of New Orleans before the Civil War. The students will take notes on the music of that time period and the influence the black occupants had on the city and the customs.

*Strategies:* The students will discuss what they learned about blacks during that time period in New Orleans and how it compares to blacks living in Philadelphia at that time. What did these communities have in common? How were they different? What type of social life occurred in these communities?

*Closing Activity:* Write a short story as a person living in pre-Civil War America who has visited both cities. What is the stark contrast that strikes you amongst the two cities? Complete a Venn Diagram highlighting the similarities and differences in these two communities.

## Final Lesson: Class Ball

*Objectives:* Class ball. Students will pretend they are different segments of New Orleans' and our city's society. Students will pick different societal roles out of a ball (i.e. upper class landowner's daughter, enslaved cook etc.). They will then collaborate with the rest of the class to plan a ball using the customs of the time and from each city.

### *Material/Resources:*

- Video segments of "Ken Burns Jazz"
- Video Worksheet
- Vocabulary list
- Jazz sound clips
- Computer

*Procedures:* The students will research the societal norms and rules that involve planning a ball. The students will use the internet to do this. They will then use what they find to present in small groups to the class.

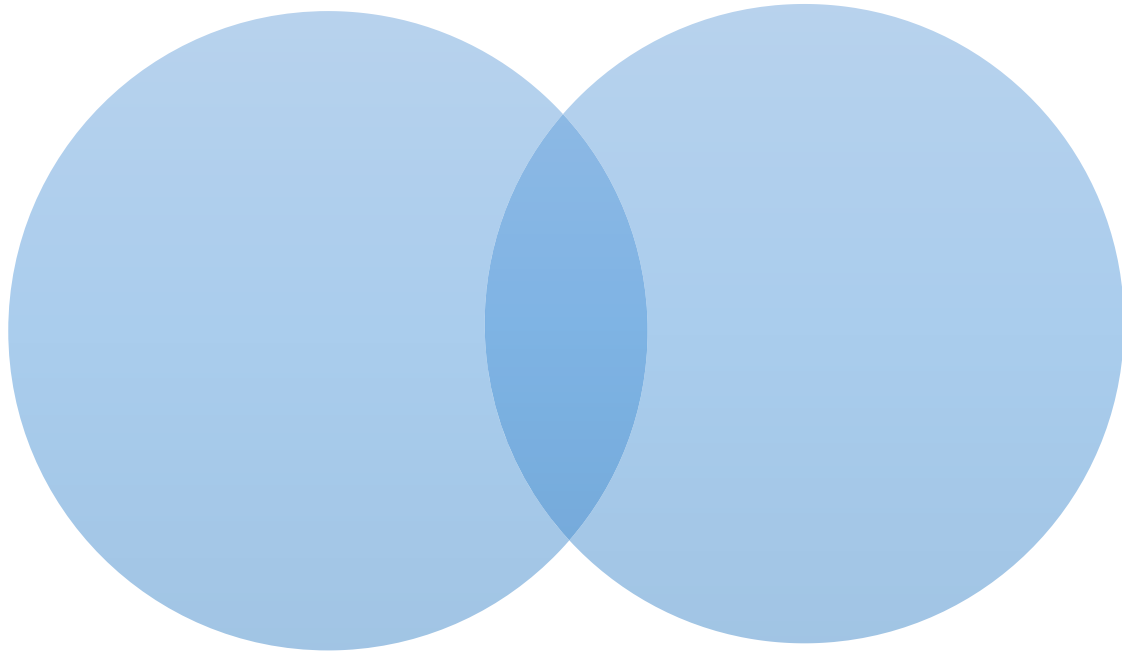
*Closing Activity:* What type of music and dances were considered the standard for a ball at this time in history? The students will document the process and explain what life is like for different societal roles during the early 1800's. Class and race played a huge part, but how? What and how did music play a part in the customs of the day? If you were free and black, in what ways were you truly "free"? The students will write a five paragraph essay explaining their findings.

### *Adaptations to the Final Project:*

- PowerPoint Presentation
- Skit
- Journal Entry

**Venn Diagram for Lesson 2**

**What are the similarities and differences between the free and enslaved communities of New Orleans and Philadelphia? How did music play an important part of the culture in these communities? List your findings in the provided diagram.**



## **Ken Burns' Jazz Episode One: Gumbo Worksheet (Sample)**

1. Name some genres of music that are considered the roots of jazz according to this video. (List at least three)
2. What was the name of a popular form of musical entertainment that started before the Civil War? What popular character lends its name to the Post-Reconstruction era of the country?
3. What were some of the societal groups of New Orleans? What music was popular with each group?
4. What two genres of music was created in New Orleans in the 1890s that are considered the predecessors of jazz?
5. What is Congo Square and why is it important to not only the culture of the city but music itself?





Rubric for Journal Entries (Sample)

Rubric for Historical Fiction (letters, journals, and newspaper articles)

Criteria	Excellent 5	Good 4	Close 3	Needs Improvement 2	Poor Effort 1	NA 0
Ideas and Content	My paper brings the time & place my character lived alive; vividly describes her/his experiences and values; refers to relevant, historically accurate details.	My paper reveals the time and place my character lived; describes a day in her/his life; most or all details are historically accurate.	The time & place my character lived is clear, but his/her experiences are more like a list than a letter or diary entry; some details may be historically inaccurate.	I tell the reader when and where my story is set but make no attempt to include historically accurate facts or details.	The setting of my story is murky, and the characters' experiences and/or values are often historically inaccurate.	I didn't write enough to judge my own ideas and content.
Organization	My writing has a beginning, middle, and end that are easy to identify and follows the designated format.	I have either a strong lead, developed middle or satisfying ending but not all three. And I followed the designated format.	I have either a strong lead, developed middle or satisfying ending but not all three. But I made some mistakes with the format.	My paper failed to contain two of the following: a strong lead, developed middle, satisfying ending, or formatting was missing.	My paper failed to contain three of the following: a strong lead, developed middle, satisfying ending, or the formatting was missing.	I didn't write enough to judge.
Paragraphs	I indent the beginnings of all paragraphs & have one topic per paragraph. I wrote at least 5 paragraphs.	I indent the beginnings of all paragraphs, have one topic/paragraph, and I wrote 5 paragraphs.	Some of my paragraphs are too long, too short, or not indented. I wrote at least 5 paragraphs.	I have several problems with paragraphs and/or I wrote less than 5 paragraphs.	I use incorrect paragraph format and/or I wrote less than 5 paragraphs.	I didn't write enough to judge.
Voice and Tone	I use 1st person. My voice sounds like a real person. My paper has personality & shows how my character thinks and feels.	I sound like I care about the topic. My writing voice is engaging but may fade in and out.	My tone is OK but my paper could have been written by anyone. I need to reveal more about how I think and feel about the topic.	My writing is bland, mechanical or pretentious. It sounds like I have not found my own way to say things. I used 2nd or 3rd person.	My writing is too formal or inappropriately informal. There may be no hints of a real person in it. It may sound like I don't like the topic.	I didn't write enough to judge
Word choice	The words I use are striking but natural, e.g., "wondered" instead of "thought." I use powerful verbs & historically accurate words, phrases and slang from the period.	My paper has some fine word choices and generally good language. Some parts may be routine.	The words I use are acceptable but ordinary. I should try to use more expressive words.	My word choice is uninspired, colorless and dull, or sounds like I am trying too hard to impress. Some words may be used incorrectly.	The same words are repeated over and over and over and over. Some words may be confusing to a reader.	I had better get busy....
Conventions	I use the correct grammar, capitals, spelling, and punctuation.	I made some errors, perhaps by taking risks and using interesting words or sentences.	My spelling is correct on common words. Some errors in grammar and punctuation. I	Frequent errors are distracting but do not interfere with the meaning of my paper.	Many errors in grammar, capitalization, spelling & punctuation make my paper hard to read.	I didn't write enough to judge.

		need to check it again.			
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This rubric was taken from [historywithmrgreen.com](http://historywithmrgreen.com)

## Teacher Resources

Alper, Garth. "New Orleans Music and Katrina." *Popular Music and Society* 29.4 (2006): 461-63. Web. 28 June 2017.

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"Congo Square, New Orleans." *The SAGE Encyclopedia of African Cultural Heritage in North America*. N.p.: n.p., 2015. N. pag. Web. 28 June 2017.

Cooper, Lee B. "New Orleans Music: Legacy and Survival [Special Issue]." *Popular Music and Society* 31.2 (2008): 149. Web. 28 June 2017.

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ry, Andy. "The 'Caruso of Jazz' and a 'Creole Benvenuto Cellini': Verdi, 'Miserere . Ah, Che La Morte Ognora' (Leonora, Manrico), 'Il Trovatore', Act IV." *Cambridge Opera Journal* 28.2 (2016): 183-86. Web. 28 June 2017.

George, Courtney. "From Bounce to the Mainstream: Hip Hop Representations of Post-Katrina New Orleans in Music, Film and Television." *European Journal of American Culture* 35.1 (2016): 17-32. Web. 28 June 2017.

Hobson, Vic. *Creating Jazz Counterpoint : New Orleans, Barbershop Harmony, and the Blues*. Jackson: U of Mississippi, 2014. Web. 28 June 2017.

Le Menestrel, Sara, and Jacques Henry. "'Sing Us Back Home': Music, Place, and the Production of Locality in Post-Katrina New Orleans." *Popular Music and Society* 33.2 (2010): 179-202. Web. 28 June 2017.

Lipsitz, George. "New Orleans in the World and the World in New Orleans." *Black Music Research Journal* 31.2 (2011): 261-90. Web. 28 June 2017.

Powell, Paul R. "Jazz, Jambalaya, and Jubilee in New Orleans: The Unique Culture That Birthed a Unique Music." *The Hymn - A Journal of Congregational Song* 66.1 (2015): 5-7. Web. 28 June 2017.

Roberts, Robin. "Two Sides of Frenchmen Street and New Orleans Hybrid Music: The Panorama Jazz Band and the Zydeponks." *Popular Music and Society* 31.2 (2008): 201-12. Web. 28 June 2017.

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Sakakeeny, Matt. "'Under the Bridge': An Orientation to Soundscapes in New Orleans."

*Ethnomusicology* 54.1 (2010): 1-27. Web. 28 June 2017.

Stanonis, Anthony J. "New Orleans' Rebirth: Reconsidering Race and Culture in Louisiana, 1699-1861, Building the Devil's Empire: French Colonial New Orleans by Shannon Lee Dawdy, Race, Sex, and Social Order in Early New Orleans by Jennifer Spear and The World That Made New Orleans: From Spanish Silver to Congo Square by Ned Sublette." *The Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology* 15.2 (2010): 526. Web. 28 June 2017.

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Ramsey, Guthrie P. *Race Music*. University of California Press, 2003.

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Yamanaka, Mishio. *Erasing the Color Line: The Racial Formation of Creoles of Color and the Public School Integration Movement in New Orleans, 1867-1880*, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2013.

Clark, Emily S. "Creoles, Catholics, and Color Lines." *Journal of Africana Religions*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2014, pp. 263-270.

## **Student/Web Resources**

<https://theculturetrip.com/north-america/usa/louisiana/articles/5-music-genres-that-define-new-orleans/>

<http://www.neworleanscvb.com/things-to-do/music/styles/>

<http://musicrising.tulane.edu>

<http://www.pbs.org/show/jazz/>

## Standards

This curriculum unit aligns with the Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Reading and Writing in History and Social Studies.

- *Reading in History and Social Studies Standards*
  - CC.8.5.11-12.C. Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.
  - CC.8.5.11-12.F. Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.
  - CC.8.5.11-12.F. Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.
  - CC.8.5.11-12.J. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 11–CCR text complexity band independently and proficiently
  
- *Writing in History and Social Studies Standards*
  - CC.8.6.11-12.I. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
  - CC.8.6.11-12.G. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the specific task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation
  - CC.8.6.11-12.F. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
  - CC.8.6.11-12.E. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products

in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

- CC.8.6.11-12.B.\* Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes. • Introduce a topic and organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. • Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic. • Use varied transitions and sentence structures to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts. • Use precise language, domain-specific vocabulary and techniques such as metaphor, simile, and analogy to manage the complexity of the topic; convey a knowledgeable stance in a style that responds to the discipline and context as well as to the expertise of likely readers. • Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation provided (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic)