



[Note to Teachers: This series of lessons uses songs that address the use of drugs for recreation and escape. If your school policy allows, you might take advantage of opening a discussion on the topic of inappropriate use of drugs. If your curriculum is subject to restrictions on the topic, you should review the videotape before using it in the classroom.]

BEHIND THE MUSIC

Music in America 1968

Lessons for Music and Social Studies Classes, Grades 9-12

Songs of Unrest

Lesson 4 of 4

Objective

- Students will identify popular songs from 1968 and make connections with the year's current events
- Students will recognize popular music as a reflection of the culture
- Students will consider the effectiveness of music to communicate ideas

National Standards for Music Education 8, 9— Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts; Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

Materials

VHS VCR Player

Television

VH1 Cable in the Classroom program Behind the Music: Music in America 1968

Web-based lesson materials



Procedures

1. Show students second 10 minutes of the video Behind the Music: Music in America 1968. You may show the entire video, but questions in this lesson are related to music in the video's second segment.
2. Briefly outline some major current events of 1968 covered in this section of the video (Vietnam War, Tet Offensive, anti-war protest movement, civil rights movement)
3. Ask the students "What was the Civil Rights movement?" (African American struggle for personal liberties guaranteed to U.S. citizens by the 13th and 14th Amendments. Persuasive measures African Americans used to seek civil rights included passive resistance and nonviolent protest such as sit-ins and marches.)
4. Review, with students, songs they heard in this segment of the video. Ask students what the titles and lyrics reflect? --Open discussion. You may expect answers such as
 - "We're a Winner"--Curtis Mayfield
(Lyrics of "I don't mind leaving here / to show the world we have no fear / 'cause we're a winner," inspire courage and efforts to rally to a cause.)
 - "People Got to Be Free"--The Rascals
(Desire for equal rights for all races and nationalities.)
 - "Street Fighting Man"--The Rolling Stones
(Political, anti-war, and race riots in the streets of the United States and Europe.)
 - "People Get Ready"--The Impressions
(Individual and societal preparation or maturation for new rights and responsibilities.)
 - "Say it Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud"--James Brown
(Esteem and value of ethnic minority heritage.)
 - "Think"--Aretha Franklin
(Refraining from impulsive, violent reaction in favor of giving serious, mindful thought to consequences and effect of one's actions on individuals and society)
 - "Abraham, Martin, and John"--Dion
(Assassination of America's leaders, often following national acts of leadership at great personal sacrifice. Title refers to Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, and John F. Kennedy.)
5. Ask students "What changes in American society did the Civil Rights movement bring about?" (Full voting rights for African Americans, increased political representation and participation, school integration and busing, employment opportunities, equal housing opportunities. You might also expect answers that include the Black Power movement, race riots in the nation's large cities, the advent of mass marches to achieve objectives.)
6. Ask students what they think about the video's statement that music was building a bridge across the racial divide. (Be prepared to accept variety of positive and negative answers such as: African American musicians were receiving wide play on radio and television broadcasts and the resulting popularity; acceptance by mainstream entertainment outlets increased opportunities for African Americans in other areas such as sports, politics, and business; the bridge was open only for those talented and connected few while the rest of African Americans did not share in that reality.)

7. Ask students to discuss how James Brown and Aretha Franklin responded to the assassination of Martin Luther King in April, 1968. (James Brown staged concerts where he spoke out for responsible public behavior. Aretha Franklin wrote and performed the song "Think.") On the chalk board, list current songs that address today's social or political issues.
8. As an assignment, ask your students to select one of the following essay topics.
 - 1) Students can imagine that they will be performing at a large concert next week. They have the chance to use their performance as a platform for social change. In a short essay, students can address the following questions:
 - a) What message would they want the music to give?
 - b) Name four songs they would perform (students may invent titles or use songs they already know).
 - c) Write opening remark for the concert and a short verbal introduction for each of the songs.
 - 2) Students can pretend that they are producing a new CD. The CD will include four songs that comment on today's social issues and students are to write the liner notes, which will include the following:
 - a) Song titles and social theme (these can be actual songs or "invented" titles)
 - b) Composer's background and possible motivation for writing the song
 - c) Performing group, discussion of the musical style, and recent history of where the group has performed the song and to what type of audience.

VH1, in partnership with Cable in the Classroom, collaborated with MENC: The National Association for Music Education to develop this series of lessons.



National Standards for Music Education

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
5. Reading and notating music.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performances.
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.