



music studio

LESSON PLAN

BEHIND THE MUSIC

Behind the Music: Takin' It to the Streets

VH1 Music Studio
Cable in the Classroom

Lessons for Middle and High School General Music Classes

Musicians' Roles
The Modern Day Minstrel

Lesson 1 of 4

Objective

Students will identify and describe the various roles that musicians fulfill.
Students will recognize and identify various genres of music

National Standards

- 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.

Materials

Videotape of Takin' It to the Streets
Television
VCR

Procedures

1. Tell students they are going to view a program about musicians who make their living performing on the streets.
2. Tell students that while these musicians perform on the streets, some have performed in other venues in other capacities. Have students take out a pencil and paper to note some of the varying roles--or jobs-- these musicians have filled as they watch the program.
3. View program *Takin' It to the Streets*.

(Teachers: Please conduct the following procedures at point in time during the video where you deem appropriate. The program can be used in full or in part, depending on your curriculum needs.)

4. Ask students to identify the different genres of music shown in the film. Accept reasonable answers, including classical (violinists), popular or contemporary (Cagle Family), jazz (Doreen Ketchers & band), rock (Red Elvises). Also, accept folk, novelty (spoons), and such.

Compare and contrast the similarities and differences between the program's featured musicians, with the early day minstrel.

5. Lead students in a discussion of roles these musicians have filled.
(Music students, performers, teachers, concert violinists, Chinese cultural commissar, construction worker, missionaries, immigrants, parents, grandparents, etc...)
6. Discuss with students some of the reasons given by these musicians for performing on the streets. (Cash, applause, artistic freedom, self-satisfaction, audience response and access, provisions for family, reaching people, joy, self-expression, life-style, etc...)
7. Ask students to think of where music is performed in their community. Is there any performed on the streets? Can students think of any spontaneous place where musicians play? Do most musicians in the community--amateur and professional— play in organized environments such as community bands, symphonies, quartets, church choirs, school groups, and the like?
8. Assign students to identify and interview musicians in the community. Have them report to the class on their findings, including: the musicians' training, place of performances, musical style, "day" jobs, amount of practice and rehearsals, how old they were when they began studying or playing music, why they decided to become musicians, etc...
9. Invite local musicians to visit the class and discuss their respective roles as musicians.

Extensions:

For instrumental or choral classes. Have students discuss reasons why their ensemble or group might perform in a public place. Accept reasonable answers, but lead students to think of community goodwill, school music

advocacy, etc... Have students brainstorm about a public place their group could perform. Students might choose to perform as a large ensemble, or in small chamber groups. Have students create a plan to perform in one of the suggested places. Include in the plan the time and day, equipment needed, repertoire, inclement weather plan, transportation, permissions or permits, etc....

History and Social Studies Connections. You may wish to coordinate with your school's history, government, or social studies teachers to find out when students study 20th century China or modern political and governmental powers. The video's third segment features Chinese violinist Ying Wei, former Cultural Commissar under the Chinese communist regime who, because of state censorship of certain music, stopped performing and earned a living as a construction worker for 30 years. This personal story illustrates the conflict of political oppression and artistic freedom that arose in China during the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s. Have students research the Chinese Cultural Revolution, using Internet and library sources, and include two to three musicians or artists whose lives were changed by that government's policy, or dictatorial regimes in other countries.

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

This lesson is adapted from Strategies for Teaching High School General Music, compiled and edited by Keith P. Thompson and Gloria J. Kiester (copyright 1997, MENC).



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.**