



# music studio

## LESSON PLAN

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# BEHIND THE MUSIC

## Behind the Music: Takin' It to the Streets

VH1 Music Studio  
Cable in the Classroom

Lessons for Instrumental or Choral Classes, Middle School and High School

Family of Musicians

Lesson 2 of 4

### Objective

Students will demonstrate their understanding of their roles as individual performers and as ensemble members as they perform in a small ensemble.

National Standards

- 1: Singing alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
- 2: Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.

### Materials

Videotape of Takin' It to the Streets

Television

VCR

Any instrumental (or choral) small-ensemble (trio, quartet, quintet, sextet) composition at the appropriate level

Audiocassette recorder, microphone, and blank tape

## **Prior Knowledge and Experiences**

Students have had some experience performing in a small ensemble.  
Students have been practicing their individual parts for the music to be rehearsed.

## **Procedures**

### **Part I**

1. Tell students they are going to view a videotape about musicians who make their living performing on the streets. Tell them to pay special attention to the 12-member Cagle family who sing and accompany themselves on guitars and percussion instruments.
2. View videotape *Takin' It to the Streets*.
3. Discuss with students any observations they have about the Cagle family as musicians. [12:50--20:20] Accept any reasonable comments, but lead them to viewing the family as an ensemble that works together, listens to each other, and shares the spotlight--no one person is the star.
4. Have students discuss the ways that they act as a team--or an ensemble--when they are rehearsing or performing music.
5. Tell students to hold onto those thoughts about working together as an ensemble as they arrange themselves with their instruments (or in vocal ensemble position) and prepare to rehearse.

### **Part II**

6. Have students rehearse a section of a small-ensemble composition. Engage them in a discussion of the inter-relationships of the parts (that is, which instruments or voices have melody, harmony, or particular rhythmic elements).
7. Ask individual students to demonstrate the roles of their individual parts, based on the discussion, by performing a selected passage of the music.
8. Lead of discussion of how balance, blend, and articulation enhance the ensemble performance. Have students discuss how their individual roles differ in a small ensemble from their roles in the band, orchestra, or chorus. Include some discussion of appropriate behaviors for working together, such as showing respect for each other's opinions.
9. To facilitate students' understanding, record their performance and play back the tape as needed. Guide them to discuss the improvements they discern in their performance over previous rehearsals of the composition.

10. Have students identify what work is needed to further improve the balance, blend, and articulation of the performance. Ask students to rehearse the composition again, incorporating the improvements they have suggested.

### **Indicators of Success**

Students demonstrate through discussion and performance an increased understanding of their individual roles as performers in a small ensemble.

Students demonstrate improvements in balance, blend, and articulation of their performance of a small-ensemble composition.

### **Follow-up**

Before rehearsing a new small-ensemble composition, have students study their parts and discuss the interrelationships of the parts and the role that each part plays in the overall performance.

**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 Band, compiled and edited by Edward J. Kvet and John E. Williamson (copyright 1998, 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.**