



100 Greatest Women of Rock and Roll



VH1 Music Studio
Cable in the Classroom

Lesson for Music Classes, Grades 7-12

Lesson 4

Note to Teachers: The programs viewed in conjunction with these lesson plans may include references, consistent with the eras portrayed, to substance abuse, violent acts, and topics of a sexual and/or political nature. Because this may be considered inappropriate for classroom use in some communities, you are encouraged to review the programs before presenting them to your students, and if necessary, choose those sections that enhance your lesson and are acceptable for use in your classroom

Objective

- Students will analyze the genres of folk and country music and the importance of the singer/songwriter.
- Students will discuss the contributions of several female artists who fall within these genres.
- Students will compose their own lyrics based on an inspiring event.

National Standards for Music Education

4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
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.

Materials

- VHS VCR Player
- Television
- Audio playback equipment
- VH1's *100 Greatest Women of Rock & Roll*, Episodes 2 and 5
- Web-based lesson materials
- Pencils/pens and paper (students)
- Copies of Informational Chart (included with lesson) for students
- Teacher selected recordings by the artists represented in this lesson (optional)

Prior Knowledge:

- Students have experience “composing” original lyrics within a specified style of music.
- Students are able to use correct musical and descriptive terms to discuss vocal and music styles.

Procedures

1. Begin the lesson by reminding students of the following concepts:

Much like the previous lesson, it is important to delve deep into each genre in order to fully understand the talent and brilliance of the female musicians being discussed. We will now explore a crossover genre, folk/country/blues, as seen from the perspectives of four different female singer/songwriters.

As defined, folk music represents the musical expressions of the common people. As previously discussed, Joan Baez was a significant contributor in the 1960's wave of folk music. She has been described as “the conscience and voice of the 1960's... [her voice was an] instrument for social change.” So, in essence, folk music and the artists we will focus on use their lyricism and melodic expression to discuss current events and inspire their audiences.

Distribute copies of the Informational Chart to students, and ask them to complete the biographical information sections as the artists are discussed, and the video notes sections while viewing the program segments.

2. One of the most influential singer/songwriters of all time is Carole King, whose tone is honest, and who represents her audience clearly and truthfully. The subject matter of her songs is reality, allowing her fans to identify with her music. Prior to showing the Carole King segment, share brief biographical information with the students, using the following as needed:

“While the landmark album *Tapestry* earned her superstar status, singer/songwriter Carole King had already firmly established herself as one of pop music's most gifted and successful composers, with work recorded by everyone from the Beatles to Aretha Franklin. Born Carole Klein on February 9, 1942 in Brooklyn, New York, she began playing piano at the age of four, and formed her first band, the vocal quartet the Co-Sines, while in high school. While attending Queens College, she fell in with budding songwriters Paul Simon and Neil Sedaka as well as Gerry Goffin, with whom she forged a writing partnership.

In 1959, Sedaka scored a hit with “Oh! Carol,” written in her honor; King cut an answer record, “Oh! Neil,” but it stiffed. She and Goffin, who eventually married, began writing under publishers Don Kirshner and Al Nevins in the famed pop songwriting house the Brill Building. In 1961, Goffin and King scored their first hit with the Shirelles’ chart-topping “Will You Love Me Tomorrow;” their next effort, Bobby Vee’s “Take Good Care of My Baby,” also hit Number One, as did “The Locomotion,” recorded by their baby-sitter, Little Eva. Together, the couple wrote over 100 chart hits in a vast range of styles, including the Chiffons’ “One Fine Day,” the Monkees’ “Pleasant Valley Sunday,” the Drifters’ “Up on the Roof,” the Cookies’ “Chains” (later covered by the Beatles), Aretha Franklin’s “(You Make Me Feel) Like a Natural Woman” and the Crystals’ controversial “He Hit Me (and It Felt like a Kiss).”

King also continued her attempts to mount a solo career, but scored only one hit, 1962’s “It Might as Well Rain Until September.” Charles Larkey, the bassist for the Tomorrow group the Myddle Class, eventually became King’s second husband after her marriage to Goffin dissolved. She and Larkey later moved to the West Coast, where in 1968 they founded the City, a trio rounded out by New York musician Danny Kortchmar. The City recorded one LP, *Now That Everything’s Been Said*, but did not tour due to King’s stage fright; as a result, the album was a commercial failure, although it did feature songs later popularized the Byrds’ (“Wasn’t Born to Follow”), Blood, Sweat and Tears (“Hi-De-Ho”) and James Taylor (“You’ve Got a Friend”).

Taylor and King ultimately became close friends, and he encouraged her to pursue a solo career. 1970’s *Writer* proved a false start, but in 1971, she released *Tapestry*, which stayed on the charts for over six years and was the best-selling album of the era. A quiet, reflective work which proved seminal in the development of the singer/songwriter genre, *Tapestry* also scored a pair of hit singles, “So Far Away” and the chart-topping “It’s Too Late,” whose flip-side, “I Feel the Earth Move,” garnered major airplay as well. 1971’s *Music* also hit Number One, and generated the hit “Sweet Seasons;” 1972’s *Rhymes and Reasons* reached Number Two on the charts, and 1974’s *Wrap Around Joy*, which featured the hit “Jazzman,” hit the Number One spot.

In 1975, King and Goffin reunited to write *Thoroughbred*, which also featured contributions from James Taylor, David Crosby and Graham Nash. After 1977’s *Simple Things*, she mounted a tour with the backing group Navarro, and married her frequent songwriting partner Rick Evers, who died a year later after a heroin overdose. 1980’s *Pearls*, a collection of performances of songs written during her partnership with Goffin, was her last significant hit, and King soon moved to a tiny mountain village in Idaho, where she became active in the environmental movement. After 1983’s *Speeding Time*, she took a six-year hiatus from recording before releasing *City Streets*, which featured guest Eric Clapton. 1993’s *Colour of Your Dreams* included a cameo from Guns N’ Roses guitarist Slash; a year later, King made her Broadway debut in the drama *Bloodbrothers*.”

3. Show VH1’s 100 Greatest Women of Rock & Roll: Episode 5 with Susan Sarandon, #10 – Carole King segment. Ask students to pay careful attention to note not only her vocal style, but also the overall style of her music. If desired, play a teacher selected recording of a Carole King song.
4. Loretta Lynn is the first female musician noted in the Country genre for composing her own songs. Prior to showing the Loretta Lynn segment, share brief biographical information with the students, using the following as needed:

“Loretta Lynn was born in Butcher Hollow, KY, on April 14, 1934. During the first twelve years of her life, she sang in churches and at a variety of local concerts.

At age thirteen, Loretta married Oliver “Mooney” Lynn. By the time she was seventeen Loretta had four children. Inspired by his wife’s vocal abilities, Mooney bought his wife a guitar on her eighteenth birthday, and Loretta began to teach herself to play. Within a few months, Loretta was writing her own music and with her husband’s encouragement, she began singing with a local band on the weekends. Loretta’s big break came when Mooney entered her in a local talent contest. Not only did she win, but she also received a personal invitation from Buck Owens to perform on his television show. Her performance was well received and caught the attention of Zero Records, who immediately contacted her and offered a recording deal. Loretta flew to LA in 1960, and recorded one of her own songs, “I’m A Honky Tonk Girl.” Mooney then packed the family and headed for Nashville, where he hoped he and Loretta could plug the record at local radio stations. The song was a hit even before they reached Nashville. The single eventually climbed as high as number fourteen on the charts.

Loretta and family moved to the city in 1960. A year later, she became a regular member of the Grand Ole Opry, had a number one hit album, and gave birth to twin girls. It didn’t take long for Nashville to grab on to the rising star. Loretta was offered a record deal with Decca Records, and accepted. “Success,” Loretta’s first single with Decca Records was released in 1962, and

climbed all the way to number six. For the next decade, Loretta released honky tonk hit after hit, all of them reaching the Top Ten List. In 1966, longing for her own sound, Loretta strayed from Honky Tonk, and began recording singles that she had written. Over the course of the next four years, Lynn pulled in 13 Top Ten hits, and was hailed the best country music lyricist ever. In 1970, Loretta became the first-ever female country artist to receive a gold album. In the mid 1970's, Loretta put pen to paper, writing the autobiography, "Coal Miner's Daughter." Six years later, in 1976, Loretta's book became a New York Times best seller. The book would eventually be adapted to the screen in 1980, and become a critically acclaimed hit with Sissy Spacek winning an Oscar for her performance. While the movie and the movie's theme song climbed the charts, Loretta became the only female country artist to appear on the cover of *Newsweek* in 1973. She was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame. Today, Loretta is a successful businesswoman who owns her own music publishing company. She also owns and operates a Dude Ranch and campground in Hurricane Mills, Tennessee, featuring a plantation styled home that is an exact replica of her childhood home. Loretta continues to perform across the United States, and has released several singles. Loretta and Mooney's children take turns balancing the responsibilities of the Loretta Lynn Ranch and Campgrounds in Tennessee, and several serve as part of her touring entourage."

5. Show VH1's 100 Greatest Women of Rock & Roll: Episode 2 with Geri Halliwell, #65 – Loretta Lynn segment. Ask students to make note of the actual style of her song writing. If desired, play a teacher selected recording of a LorettaLynn song.
6. Bonnie Raitt is mostly known for being an innovative, "unlikely" blues artist, with a unique and inspirational sound that showcases her expertise and spirit. Prior to showing the Bonnie Raitt segment, share brief biographical information with the students, using the following as needed:

"More than a best-selling artist, respected guitarist, expressive singer, and accomplished songwriter, Bonnie Raitt has become an institution in American music. Born to a musical family, Bonnie Raitt is the daughter of celebrated Broadway singer John Raitt (*Carousel*, *Oklahoma!*, *The Pajama Game*) and accomplished pianist/singer Marge Goddard.

In the late '60s, restless in Los Angeles, she moved east to Cambridge, Massachusetts. She was already deeply involved with folk music and the blues at that time. From Mississippi Fred McDowell, Sippie Wallace, Son House, Muddy Waters, and John Lee Hooker she learned first-hand lessons of life as well as invaluable techniques of performance. "I'm certain that it was an incredible gift for me to not only be friends with some of the greatest blues people who've ever lived, but to learn how they played, how they sang, how they lived their lives, ran their marriages, and talked to their kids," she says. "I was especially lucky as so many of them are no longer with us." Word spread quickly of the young, red-haired blueswoman, her soulful, unaffected way of singing, and her uncanny insights into blues guitar. Warner Bros. tracked her down, signed her up, and in 1971 released her debut album, *Bonnie Raitt*. Her interpretations of classic blues by Robert Johnson and Sippie Wallace made a powerful critical impression, but the presence of intriguing tunes by contemporary songwriters, as well as several examples of her own writing, indicated that this artist would not be restricted to any one pigeonhole or style.

On March 6, 2000, Bonnie was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, holding nine Grammys in her honor; this was followed by her welcome, along with her father, into the Hollywood Bowl Hall of Fame in June 2002. Bonnie continues to use her growing influence to affect the way music is perceived and appreciated in the world. In 1988, she helped found the Rhythm and Blues Foundation, which works to improve royalties, financial conditions and recognition for a whole generation of R&B pioneers to whom she feels we owe so much. In 1995, she initiated the Bonnie Raitt Fender Guitar Project with Fender and the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, currently running 180 clubs around the world, to encourage inner city kids to play music as budgets for music instruction in the schools run dry.

"I feel strongly that this appreciation needs to be out there so that black, Latino and all kids can understand the roots of their own musical heritage," she explains. "The consolidation of the music business has made it difficult to encourage styles like the blues, all of which deserve to be celebrated as part of our most treasured national resources."

7. Show VH1's 100 Greatest Women of Rock & Roll: Episode 5 with Susan Sarandon, #4 – Bonnie Raitt segment. Ask students to compare her "spin" on the blues to what was discussed in the previous lesson with Etta James and Aretha Franklin. If desired, play a teacher selected recording of a Bonnie Raitt song.

8. Joni Mitchell, one of the most celebrated female folk artists. Prior to showing the Joni Mitchell segment, share brief biographical information with the students, using the following as needed:

“b. Roberta Joan Anderson, 7 November 1943, Fort McLeod, Alberta, Canada. After studying art in Calgary, this singer-songwriter moved to Toronto in 1964, where she married Chuck Mitchell in 1965. The two performed together at coffee houses and folk clubs, playing several Mitchell originals including “The Circle Game”.

Other early material included the plaintive “Eastern Rain”, and “Brandy Eyes”, which displayed Mitchell’s love of sharp description and internal rhyme. Mitchell was initially discovered in Coconut Grove by former Byrds member, David Crosby. He went on to produce her startling debut album *Joni Mitchell*, aka *Song To A Seagull*. “Chelsea Morning” presented a feeling of wonder in its almost childlike appreciation of everyday observations. The chorus (“It’s love’s illusions I recall/I really don’t know love at all”) became something of a statement of policy from Mitchell, whose analyses of love - real or illusory - dominated her work. Apart from her skills as a writer, Mitchell was a fine singer and imaginative guitarist with a love of open tuning. The extent of Mitchell’s commercial acceptance was demonstrated on the humorous “Big Yellow Taxi”, a sardonic comment on the urban disregard for ecology. Following a sabbatical, Mitchell returned with her most introspective work to date, *Blue*. Less melodic than her previous albums, the arrangements were also more challenging and the material self-analytical to an almost alarming degree. Austere and at times anti-romantic, *Blue* was an essential product of the singer-songwriter era. On *Blue*, the artist moved from a purely folk-based perspective to that of rock, as the piano, rather than guitar, became the natural outlet for her compositions. Stephen Stills (guitar/bass), James Taylor (guitar), “Sneaky” Pete Kleinow (pedal steel) and Russ Kunkel (drums) embellished material inspired by an extended sojourn traveling in Europe, a new maturity instilled a lasting resonance to the stellar inclusions, “Carey”, “River” and the desolate title track. The move into jazz territory continued throughout 1978-79, first with the double album, *Don Juan’s Reckless Daughter*. The creatively quiet decade that followed did little to detract from her status, though many were pleased to witness her renaissance in the 90’s. Rumors abounded in the 90’s that her addiction to cigarettes had caused a serious throat ailment (her voice had become progressively lower and huskier); although this was never confirmed, she was told to quit smoking, advice which she promptly ignored. Rightly regarded as one of the finest singer-songwriters of her generation, Mitchell has displayed more artistic depth and lyrical consistency than most of her illustrious contemporaries from the 70’s. Her remarkable body of work encompasses the changing emotions and concerns of a generation: from idealism to adult responsibilities, while bearing her soul on the traumas of already public relationships. That she does so with lyrical insight and melodic flair accounts for a deserved longevity.”

9. Show VH1’s 100 Greatest Women of Rock & Roll: Episode 5 with Susan Sarandon, #5 – Joni Mitchell segment. Have students discuss what is similar/different about her music as compared to Joan Baez. If desired, play a teacher selected recording of a Joni Mitchell song.
10. In the genres of folk and country, events that conspire usually are the inspiration for the artists. Singer/songwriters have the ability to express themselves, lyrically and melodically, by writing their own music. Through their contributions, the folk and country genres are greatly enhanced. Ask students to remember and reflect on their “breakthrough” moment (lesson 2). What event has happened during their life about which they might feel inspired to tell people? How could they best express this moment, in their own style of music?
11. Have students create their own lyrics (a refrain) based on this inspiring event. They may choose any genre in which to work, but it should be an appropriate choice in order to provide a truthful reflection (e.g. the Blues may not be the appropriate venue for describing a fun and exciting first ride on a roller coaster). Ask students to share their lyrics with the class.
12. The creativity and songwriting skills of the female artists discussed in this lesson have made a significant impact on their fans, as well as on American society in general, as they expressed their own concerns as they reflected those of the American people. Using the information below as needed, lead students in summarizing the contributions made by these musicians, asking them to consider the following questions:

- As women, what personal experiences might these artists have had that contributed to their music, and ultimately, their success?
- Did these artists make any significant strides for women in music?
- Why do these artists and their music still experience such popularity?

Without Joni Mitchell's "Woodstock," an entire generation would be without an anthem. This song explained and defined an experience that the "hippie" generation would be pigeonholed with forever. The song, made famous by 1960's super group Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, allowed its audience to feel the pride of "peace, love and music," remembering the brotherhood and the fun of the music, and forgetting the mud and the rain. Joni Mitchell herself was unable to attend the festival, which is a significant point in itself in not only this song, but in others as well. Her writing was so prolific that she was, and still is, able to capture emotion by observation as well as physical exploration.

Without Carole King's "Tapestry" album, her fans couldn't serenade her while she croons, "You've Got a Friend." Her songwriting skills go far beyond the typical hits. Her fans feel as though they know her. They feel as though they are Carole King. Because of this connection, she is able to depict the changing emotions as her audience changes. When she was in her 20s, she wrote "Tapestry," and painted the picture of the constantly changing lifestyle. She bottled melancholy in "So Far Away," and her audience cried as she admitted, "It's Too Late." Years later, she penned and sang the hit, "Now and Forever," reflecting on the life she has led and the memories she will never forget. This is the sign of a true artist – one who is able to maintain and reach an audience throughout life.

Without Bonnie Raitt's diligent guitar playing, her fans wouldn't be exposed to a true aspect of blues and jazz: polished technique and impeccable musicianship. It isn't only Bonnie Raitt's lyrics or the sound of her voice that makes her music great. It is her guitar playing - slide, electric or acoustic - that brings the flavor of a masterpiece. She has impressed critics and established blues musicians time and time again. She is a true master of her instrument, and a true master of her craft.

Without Loretta Lynn's ability to capture true melancholy, sharing her emotions with her audience, the world would somehow be a lonelier place. Her songwriting is honest, candid and direct, and her fans appreciated her "no nonsense" approach, saying completely what was on her mind and not apologizing for her emotions. When she loved her husband, she composed. When she was proud of her father, she composed. When she loved her children, she composed. And when her fans felt the same, they listened.

It is all of these aspects combined that show the true gifts of these artists. And it is these gifts that bring their fans of today, and will bring the fans of tomorrow, the absolute pleasure of loving music.

Student Copy

<i>Artist</i>	<i>Genre</i>	<i>Biographical Notes</i>	<i>Notes on Video Segment</i>
Carole King	Rock and Roll		
Loretta Lynn	Country		
Bonnie Raitt	Blues		
Joni Mitchell	Folk		

Supplemental Resources:

Definitions, biographical information, and historical information for the *100 Greatest Women of Rock & Roll* lesson series has been excerpted primarily from the following sources:

- www.webster.com
- www.vh1.com
- Women in Early Music: <http://150.252.8.92/www/iawm/pages/>
- Women in Music: informational Web site with contacts and mentoring, www.womeninmusic.com/
- www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/othsubj.htm

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.



These standards-based materials are provided through a partnership with MENC: The National Association for Music Education. This lesson plan was created by MENC member Amy Rosenthal, Vocal Music, Cayuga Elementary, Lake Grove, NY.