



**VH1 Fan Club  
ABBA**  
VH1 Music Studio  
Cable in the Classroom

**Lesson for Music Classes, Grades 7-12**

**Lesson 1**

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 draw conclusions on the relationship between trends and individual tastes in music and other aspects of their lives.
- Students will accurately describe the elements of different styles of music using correct musical terms.

National Standards for Music Education

6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
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 Fan Club: ABBA program
- Web-based lesson materials
- Copies of “Music and Fashion” table (included with lesson) for students
- Pencils
- Teacher selected recording of 1940’s swing music (e.g. “Sing, Sing, Sing”)

Prior Knowledge:

Students understand and are able to use musical terms such as melody, harmony, rhythm, texture, timbre, etc.

## Procedures

1. As students enter the room, take note of their footwear. Choose three students wearing differing styles of shoes to model in front of the classroom. Begin a discussion with the models about their footwear choices. Did you pick these out yourself? Do you wear this pair of shoes anywhere else besides to school? Do you have more than one pair of these shoes? Why/why not? Have you always worn this style of shoe? Why/why not?
2. Have students observe what is alike about the shoes: material, construction, soles, purpose, etc. What makes one shoe more “in” than another? Lead students to discover that although the basic function of footwear is the same, it can take on many different forms, shapes, sizes, colors, and materials. Trends come and go, and the styles of shoes and clothing that you wore as a toddler are not fashionable now. Although trends can be a strong influence on our choices, each person has individual needs and has the obligation to themselves to make his/her own choices accordingly.
3. Suggest to students the idea that, as with fashion trends, music trends come and go. Often the best of those return to popularity years later. Distribute the “Music and Fashion” worksheet found at the end of this lesson.
4. Direct students’ attention to the “Look” section of the 1940’s. Ask students if, from this description, they would wear those clothes today. Play the teacher selected recording of the 1940’s swing music. Have students briefly describe what they hear in simple musical terms: melody, rhythm, texture, timbre, etc. Add students’ ideas to the 1940’s “Elements” section of the table.
5. Show VH1 Fan Club: ABBA, Segment 1. Instruct students to add their observations of the “Look” and “Musical Elements” of the 1970’s to the appropriate section of the table.
6. Have students share and discuss their findings, comparing their observations of the “Look” and “Musical Ele-

ments” of the 70’s with those of the 40’s. Are the findings of the 70’s drastically different from those of the 40’s?

7. Lead students in a short discussion about ABBA and their continuing popularity, and share the following ABBA facts:

- ABBA was the most commercially successful pop music group of the 1970’s.
- They sold over 350 million recordings worldwide.
- They were commercially on par with Elvis Presley and The Beatles.
- ABBA’s music has inspired the movie “Muriel’s Wedding”, and the Broadway musical “Mamma Mia!”
- Their songs have been recorded by other music groups such as A\*Teens, Ace of Base, Bjorn Again, B\*witched, Erasure, LFO, and 98 Degrees, among others.
- The group recently turned down a reported \$1 billion offer for a year-long reunion tour.

8. Remind students of the discussion with Justin’s friends during the program. At one point, they tell us that others make fun of him because he listens to ABBA and not other popular artists such as Brittany Spears. Ask students to comment on whether it is important to always wear the “in” clothes, have the “in” hairstyle, and listen only to the “in” music? Lead them to discover that, like the shoes they wear and the information in the “Music and Fashion” table, the choice of what a person likes is up to them, regardless of what is popular, and that those choices may change over time. At the same time, though, is it always a good idea to only look at things from one point of view, to only eat one type of food, to only watch one type of television program, to only wear one style of clothing, or to only listen to one style of music? Guide students to appreciate the importance of a well-rounded lifestyle.

9. Assignment: Ask students to add their choices of current music and fashion trends to the ‘00’s section of the chart. Audio examples are definitely encouraged. Students should keep their work for later reference (see Lesson 2).

Curriculum connection: Art, Social Studies, and Technology

Using magazines, catalogs, online resources, and other materials, have students create a collage of trends from a period on the chart, summarizing different aspects and events of the time.

Supplemental resources:

Official ABBA fan club Web site [www.abbasite.com/start](http://www.abbasite.com/start).

“ABBA Gold: Greatest Hits,” CD, Polygram Records, 2001.

“The Winner Takes It All - The ABBA Story,” DVD, Universal Music, 2002.

## Music and Fashion

	Musicians	Dance	Look	Style	Elements
'40's	Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, Charles Parker	jive, swing	short hair, baggy suits, wide ties, flamboyant wide shawl collars, two- toned shoes	jazz	
'70's	David Bowie, Kiss, ABBA, Sweet	disco		rock	
'00's					

### 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.

Lesson One is derived from Strategies for Teaching: Middle-Level and High School Keyboard (MENC: 1996).



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 Christopher Fitzpatrick, Theater Division, The Boston Conservatory, Boston, MA.