



VH1 Fan Club
Dave Matthews Band
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 identify various tone colors, through the music of the Dave Matthews Band and through other music choices selected by individual instructor.
- Students will discuss the concept of “American music” through comparisons of other cultural music influences.
- Students will identify the influences of jazz, blues, bluegrass, rock and roll, and rap on the music of the Dave Matthews Band.

National Standards for Music Education

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 Fan Club: The Dave Matthews Band program
- Web-based lesson materials
- Copies of geared listening table (included with lesson) for students
- Pencils/Pens and paper (students)
- Teacher selected recordings of “American music” (e.g. Jazz, Blues, Ragtime, Rock and Roll, Rap genres – Louis Armstrong/Ella Fitzgerald, Elvis Presley, Bob Dylan, Run DMC)
- Recordings of two contrasting vocal versions of “The Star-Spangled Banner” (e.g. The Mormon Tabernacle Choir and Whitney Houston)
- Teacher selected recordings from the following Dave Matthews Band albums (see Supplemental Resources): Remember Two Things, Under the Table and Dreaming, Crash, Before These Crowded Streets, and Everyday (Teacher should choose songs which would be most appropriate for their individual lessons based on descriptions listed within the lessons.)

Prior Knowledge:

- Students understand and are able to identify different instruments based upon listening examples.
- Students are able to discuss using proper musical terms and show comprehension of dynamic structure, melodic and harmonic contour.

Procedures

1. To begin class, define the adjective, “American.” What does it mean to be American? What does that word describe? After brief discussion, play an excerpt of a traditional recording of “The Star-Spangled Banner.” Preface that this is considered by many to be the “ultimate American song.” Ask students to take note of the instruments and dynamics they hear. Without discussion, play the contrasting “non-traditional” recording, asking students to again analyze instrumentation and dynamic structure.

Musical Element Comparisons:

Traditional Recording
Choir with Orchestra
Mezzo-forte to Forte

Non-Traditional Recording
Solo Singer with Orchestra
Mezzo-forte to Forte

Stylistic Comparisons:

Ask students what other differences exist between these recordings (singers are performing the same song, however it sounds very different [classical versus pop]). Why is this song considered to be “the ultimate American song” (it is the definition of our country, the one song able to unify the many different cultures that make up our nation)? Is one version more “American” than the other? What would happen if we combined the two ver-

sions into one? How would it sound the same/different?

2. Request that students label the style of Dave Matthews Band using prior knowledge and their own terminology (e.g. rock and roll, folk, pop, jazz), and write it down for later reference. Answers could be a mixture of the examples given. Explain to students that the music of Dave Matthews Band is considered to be a mixture of many different American styles formed into one sound. Dave Matthews can be quoted as calling the group, “The most American band.” NOTE: Teacher may want to deliver a brief introduction of the band members, where they are from, their musical influences, etc. (See Supplemental Resources below for links to additional Web site resources.)

3. Show VH1 Fan Club: Dave Matthews Band, Segment 1 (beginning of program, stop right before Talicia’s segment, just before five minute mark).

4. After viewing, ask students if they agree with Dave Matthews’ comment of the band being “The most American band.” Why or why not? Teacher should lead discussion to highlight the aspect of diversity. Diversity, as defined, is “the composition of distinct or unlike elements or qualities” (Merriam-Webster dictionary definition). These unlike elements can be combined to create something rather unique. The American people are diverse in themselves, native to all different areas of the world, but combined to create a truly unique culture. These elements are especially evident in music considered to be “American,” for example, jazz, blues, folk, rock and roll, and rap.

5. Restate the idea that the music of Dave Matthews Band incorporates a variety of influences within its instrumentation, its lyrical content, and its melodic style. Even the performance techniques of the band members are atypical and refreshing. The sound of the Dave Matthews Band tends to shy away from typical guitar solos and stagnant bass solos normally heard in a “rock and roll” band. Use the following biographical and technique information to enhance the discussion during this step: (See Supplemental Resources for Web sites with further information.)

Dave Matthews - lead vocals and guitar. Dave is a self-taught lifelong lover of music. He credits his family with instilling in him an interest in all types of music. Dave draws from the folk traditions of many cultures from around the globe, finding common themes among their complex rhythms, and originally played only acoustic guitars when performing. He sees the guitar more as a percussive instrument. In an interview from 1996, Matthews is quoted, “The reason I stick with the acoustic is that I have an obsession with its percussive qualities. It has more of a drum quality than the electric, and on top of that, it’s a security blanket for me. It’s amazing how completely foreign electric guitar is to me. When I pick one up, it seems like such an entirely different instrument, and the subtlety that it seems to require to play is something that I haven’t developed. Whereas with acoustic, I feel like I can sort of smack away at it and break strings. Plus it keeps itself in tune fairly well, and I can feel it without all the amps; I can feel the guitar resonating.”

Carter Beauford - percussion. Carter’s busy style is flattered by the open format of live performances the band has developed. Beauford played his first professional gig at age nine with a jazz-fusion outfit led by local luminary Big Nick Nicholas (an associate of John Coltrane’s). He is an amazing musician who is able to create a mood of intensity with just a few tinkering beats on his massive drum set, with “incredibly fast hands, left-hand lead, twisted beats, cross-sticking cymbal crashes, and pile-driving double pedal chops--and all emanating from a wrap-around, multi-cymbaled kit. [Carter’s technique is taken from] old James Brown, especially with Clyde Stubblefield, Sly & the Family Stone and Stevie Wonder, the Bar-Kays, Con Funk Shun--they were all about pocket. And what about George Clinton and P-Funk? That’s pocket, man. Dennis Chambers was the master at that, plus he could play anything he wanted to over that feel.”

(Excerpted from www.effingham.com/bishop/CarterBeaufordInterview.htm)

“Filling in the pocket” information can be found at <http://ftp.nwu.edu/~pwe574/FILLINGTHEPOCKET.HTML>.

LeRoi Moore - soprano, alto, tenor and baritone saxophones, flute. Before joining Dave Matthews Band, LeRoi played jazz at the many night spots in the Charlottesville – Richmond (VA) area. “Jazz is probably my main influence,” admits LeRoi, “But at this stage I don’t

really consider myself a jazz musician." LeRoi was trained in the classics, one reason for the band's sometimes-classical sound. For him, the Dave Matthews Band remains a challenge because there is room to explore, to respond to the expressions of the other four players. "I have plenty of space to improvise, to try new ideas," says LeRoi, whom Dave credits with arranging many of the songs he writes. "It's almost better than a jazz gig." LeRoi's lyrical technique is shown through his improvisation and solo excerpts, which carry a classical "Mozart concerto" type of virtuosity.

Boyd Tinsley - violin. Boyd was first classically trained, under the direction of Isador Saslav, the concertmaster of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. However, he instead immersed himself in the works of highly regarded players such as Stephan Grappelli, Jean-Luc Ponty and Papa John Creach, all of whom worked in the realms of jazz, rock and blues. He further expanded his chops while attending the University of Virginia, where his fraternity, Sigma Nu, held periodic coffeehouses. With open to the public jam sessions that lasted all night, they attracted not only the cream of the local crop, but visiting musical luminaries such as Hot Tuna/Jefferson Airplane guitarist Jorma Kaukonen and Muddy Waters sideman Bob Margolin. Boyd's technique has been called "muscular sawing," breaking strings off the bow with precision and almost flaring smoke from his speed and agility.

Stefan Lessard - bass (electric and upright). He was just 16 when Matthews whisked him away from school to join him, drummer Carter Beauford and saxophonist LeRoi Moore in their fledgling band, which made for some interesting situations when the group, with its underage bass player, were booked into bars and clubs. "Yeah, there were a couple of times I was rushed out the back door 'cause some cops in front were asking for IDs," Lessard remembers with a laugh. "And since I wasn't legally allowed to be drinking, I was usually elected to drive the van. But [age] was nothing too major, and never a big issue as far as the music was concerned." He started playing bass during his early teenage years after developing a taste for reggae and then, through his high school music teacher, jazz. "It made sense for me to start playing jazz," says Lessard, who quickly switched from electric to upright bass. "It was a good way to practice scales and then play along with the music. I kinda faked it for awhile." Concerning high school, "I had my parents' backing; they were a little iffy when I first dropped out, and so were the rest of the guys in the band," says Lessard, who eventually got his GED and even spent a month studying music at Virginia Commonwealth University. "To me, it was all education." In fact, Lessard is continuing his education via music classes on the Internet, and plans to return to a formal classroom situation, someday. Stefan's playing is consistent and creative, providing the undertones for lyrical freedom of the other band members.

6. Have students compare and contrast the music of Dave Matthews Band with other typical American musicians. Students should focus on instrumentation and melodic style. Below is a sample table for geared listening. Distribute tables with information supplied, leaving the "instrument" column blank. Students should fill in the instruments they aurally identify during class while listening to the teacher selected recordings. (Teacher creativity is encouraged in choosing the music examples to compare with Dave Matthews Band. The following choices (*) are simply suggestions. Musical examples should be limited to excerpts which gather the true feeling and concept of the music, but that are feasible to accomplish in one class period.)

TEACHER COPY

<u>*Artist/Song</u>	<u>Genre</u>	<u>Instruments</u>	<u>DMB album/song</u>	<u>Genre</u>	<u>Instruments</u>
Ella Fitzgerald/ "Take the A Train"	Blues/Jazz	Voice, bass, piano, drum set	Before These Crowded Streets/ "Crush"	Blues/Jazz	Voice, acoustic guitar, electric bass, piano, violin, drum set, tenor saxophone.
Elvis Presley/ "Don't Be Cruel"	Rock and Roll	Voice, bass, guitar, piano, percussion.	Crash/ "Too Much"	Rock and Roll	Voice, acoustic guitar, electric bass, violin, drum set, baritone saxophone
Bob Dylan/ "The Times They Are A-Changin'"	Folk	Voice, acoustic guitar, harmonica	Crash/ "Lie In Our Graves"	Folk	Voice, acoustic guitar, electric bass, violin, alto saxophone, drum set
RunDMC and Aerosmith/ "Walk This Way"	Rock/Rap	Voice, electric guitar, bass, drum set, turn tables, mixer	Under the Table and Dreaming/ "Ants Marching" (start at 2min.)	Rock/Rap	Voice, acoustic guitar, electric bass, soprano sax, violin, drum set

STUDENT COPY

<u>*Artist/Song</u>	<u>Genre</u>	<u>Instruments</u>	<u>DMB album/song</u>	<u>Genre</u>	<u>Instruments</u>
Ella Fitzgerald/ "Take the A Train"	Blues/Jazz		Before These Crowded Streets/ "Crush"	Blues/Jazz	
Elvis Presley/ "Don't Be Cruel"	Rock and Roll		Crash/ "Too Much"	Rock and Roll	
Bob Dylan/ "The Times They Are A-Changin'"	Folk		Crash/ "Lie In Our Graves"	Folk	
RunDMC and Aerosmith/ "Walk This Way"	Rock/Rap		Under the Table and Dreaming/ "Ants Marching" (start at 2min.)	Rock/Rap	

T7. To conclude, ask students to look back on the genre they had selected to label the music of Dave Matthews Band at the beginning of class. Do they agree with the original answer? Like the actual American “melting pot,” the music of Dave Matthews Band is eclectic and speckled with various musical influences to create one unique taste of music. As a homework assignment, ask students to bring in a copy of three or four of their favorite songs for the next class (see Lesson 2).

Supplemental Resources:

- Official Dave Matthews Band Web site www.dmband.com
- Band history, biographical information, etc. www.dmbcrash.com
- General information about American music (jazz, pop, blues, etc.) www.American-Music.org

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.