



VH1's "Movies That Rock": Moulin Rouge

VH1 Music Studio
Cable in the Classroom

Lesson for Music Classes, Grades 7-12

Lesson 2

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.

While this lesson can be completed by viewing the necessary portions of the programs, the most benefit and enjoyment of them will be gained by having students view the opera "La Bohème" and VH1's "Movies That Rock": Moulin Rouge in their entirety in preparation for these activities.

Objective

- Students will discuss the social and cultural opposites of the era as they are portrayed in the movie "Moulin Rouge."
- Students will create and perform final scenes for a musical movie.
- Students will assess performances through constructive criticism and by using a rubric created by the class.

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
- VH1's "*Movies That Rock*": *Moulin Rouge*
- Web-based lesson materials
- Pencils and paper (students)

Prior Knowledge:

- Students have a basic familiarity with the genre of movie musicals.
- Students have watched VH1's "*Movies That Rock*": *Moulin Rouge* in its entirety. (To complete this lesson, students must watch at least the final scenes [approximately the last 30 minutes] of the program.)
- Students have a general knowledge of events in their community, or in the nation, from reading newspapers or through other sources. (It may be helpful to encourage students in the weeks before beginning this unit to familiarize themselves with news topics.)

Procedures

1. Show VH1's *Movies That Rock: Moulin Rouge*, the final scenes, approximately the last 30 minutes of the program. (If students have already viewed the entire program, this step may be omitted.)
2. Lead students in a discussion of the social "opposites," or contrasts, that are evident in the movie and represent real life issues. What are the differences between the wealthy lifestyle of the time and the lifestyle of the Bohemians? Have students create a list of the differences on their own paper (i.e. financially well off vs. living from day to day, a rigid and conservative lifestyle vs. a free spirited and creative lifestyle, a healthy lifestyle, with access to medicine, good food, etc. vs. an illness filled and/or addictive lifestyle, working people vs. playing people, the joy of life and youth vs. the sadness of death and aging, etc.).
3. Ask students to reflect on the topics that have been in their daily and/or local community newspapers, and try to relate their lives to those of the characters in "Moulin Rouge." What topics in "real life" prompt them to make decisions about how they feel politically, socially, morally, etc.? How often must they decide whether to act independently, or go with the opinions of others? Are they swayed by popular opinion? Do they feel they have the rights of expression that the characters of the Bohemian lifestyle in "Moulin Rouge" had?
4. Tell students that they will be creating a new final scene for the movie "Moulin Rouge." Explain that they will be critiquing their own scenes, and those of the rest of the class. Have them create a rubric that they feel is a fair means of assessment to use at the conclusion of their class presentations (see sample at end of lesson).
5. Divide the class into small groups. Using the list of "opposites" created earlier, ask students to develop ideas about how they could express these opposites in a dramatic presentation. The scene should be set in present day, in any city in the United States.

6. Have students use these presentation ideas to write their own text only final scene for a movie musical like “Moulin Rouge.” Students may include musical selections if they wish, and they should rehearse their scenes with the intent to perform them. The music does not need to be performed.

Note to Teachers: The students should work independently, with the teacher observing, and only occasionally making comments, so this project is a result of the students’ creative talents.

7. Have students perform their completed final scenes for the class, and guide them in discussing their opinions and viewpoints. Ask students to assess their own scene, and those of their classmates, by using the rubric they created.

Interdisciplinary Extensions:

1. Social Studies: Discuss the social and cultural opposites in past societies and in the world today. Have students research and evaluate the results these differences have on our lives and on future civilizations.
2. Reading: Have students read scripts of other movies and reflect on the power that movies can have on public opinion.
3. Drama: Have students work in small groups to create additional dramatic scenes that can be shared with English classes, with the goal of increasing the awareness of how the English language can be used to express ideas and emotions.
4. Art: Have students design invitations to send to staff members, inviting them to observe the group performances/presentations.

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 Alice Backus, Alexander Graham Bell Academy, Cleveland Municipal School District, Cleveland, Ohio.

SAMPLE RUBRIC

Place a check in the appropriate box.

	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Exceptional
1. All students participated				
2. Opposites are presented clearly.				
3. The dramatic presentation uses grade level appropriate language.				
4. Audience understood the thoughts students tried to express.				
5. Students' opinion of their own group endeavor.				