



VH1 Rock Docs: NY77: The Coolest Year in Hell

VH1 Music Studio
Cable in the Classroom

Lesson for Music Classes, Grades 7-12
Lesson3

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.

Objectives

- Students will review information from *VH1's Rock Docs: NY77: The Coolest Year in Hell* by identifying issues causing unrest in New York throughout 1977, and discussing how these factors can result in musical inspiration.
- Students will be able to compare graffiti and art work to the music of New York in 1977.
- Students will listen and understand how styles of music can merge into new styles and how artists can influence each other.

National Standards:

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 or DVD Player
- Television
- Audio playback equipment and/or computer with Internet access and speakers
- *VH1 Rock Docs: NY77: The Coolest Year in Hell*
- Listening examples sampled or downloaded from iTunes
- Examples of art work
- Copies of lyrics to “Life During Wartime” (provided below)

Prior Knowledge:

- Students should have a basic understanding of music elements such as melody, rhythm, and tempo.
- Students should be able to identify common popular music instruments by characteristic sound/timbre or appearance.
- Students should understand or be introduced to improvisation as it relates to music.

Procedures

1. Give an overview of *VH1 Rock Docs: NY77: The Coolest Year in Hell* by leading a short answer review from the previous lessons. Possible questions include the following:
 - a. What were some of the issues causing unrest in New York throughout 1977?
 - b. How did hip-hop emerge? Describe hip-hop battles. What sound sources are present in hip-hop music? Name some of the first and foremost artists.
 - c. Under what circumstances did disco emerge? What were the main venues for this type of music?
 - d. Name the artists associated with the roots of punk. Where were many of these bands performing and being discovered? What were some of the “rules” and performance practices of punk music?
2. Give the student-friendly objectives of noting how art is similar to music in its public appeal, and how different genres of music can begin to mix and merge over time.
3. Watch the video from the 40:53 through 59:14.
4. Show students images of Any Warhol paintings. These can be seen in great number by using a search engine that reveals images, such as Yahoo! Be aware that some images that result are Warhol references or tributes. Lead a brief discussion that includes the following possible questions and information:
 - a. What types of everyday images do you see in Andy Warhol’s paintings?
 - b. How are popular music genres, such as hip-hop, disco, and rap similar to this style of art?

- c. How is graffiti similar to Andy Warhol's "pop art" works?
 - d. Why do some people believe that popular music, Warhol's "pop art," and graffiti are true art forms, while others believe they are not?
 - e. Andy Warhol was a fan of music, affiliating himself with music artists such as Velvet Underground, the Rolling Stones, and Debbie Harry. Devo and David Bowie were influenced by Warhol, with Bowie recording a song called "Andy Warhol." These songs can be sampled if time permits, while students look at additional works by Andy Warhol.
 - f. Warhol designed the cover for The Velvet Underground's 1967 debut album, *The Velvet Underground and Nico*. Show an image of this "Banana LP," widely accessible on the Internet.
5. Watch the brief video segment from 20:38 to 22:13.
6. Lead a discussion about how the influences of some music genres sometimes work their way into other styles of music. The following are a few suggestions of topics and representative examples. Teachers should screen songs for appropriate versions.
- a. Listen to "Life During Wartime" (1979) by Talking Heads. Lyrics are included in supplemental resources.
 - i. What references are made to social issues of the day?
 - ii. How do Talking Heads reference other music styles in their lyrics?
 - b. Listen to "Sugar on My Tongue" (1977) by the Talking Heads and "Sugar (Gimme Some)" (2004) by Trick Daddy. How are these two songs similar and different in style?
 - c. Listen to "Walk this Way" (1986), the collaborative remake by Aerosmith and Run-DMC of the 1975 original version by Aerosmith.
 - i. How does the new version of the song feature hip-hop traits and traditionally rock traits?
 - ii. Can you think of other instances where artists from different musical styles combine to create popular music? ("Stan" by Eminem and Dido; "Over and Over" by Nelly and Tim McGraw)
 - d. Listen to "Rapture" (1980) by Blondie. Some people credit this song with being the first rap song to top the charts.
 - i. What elements of hip-hop appear in this song?
 - ii. Would you consider this a hip-hop song or rap song? Why or why not?
 - e. Listen to "Crazy Train" (1981) by Ozzy Osbourne, followed by "Let's Go" (2004) by Trick Daddy.
 - i. Grandmaster Caz stated that hip-hop artists took the "hottest parts out of records that already existed and kind of pumped them up." What parts of "Crazy Train" are sampled in "Let's Go"?
 - ii. Describe other instances where music from one artist is sampled by another artist. ("I Think I'm in Love with You" by Jessica Simpson samples "Jack and Diane" by John Cougar; "I'll Be Missing You" by Puff Daddy samples "Every Breath You Take" by the Police)

Extensions:

Students can download or access free software or applications, such as Garage Band or Audacity to make their own rap tracks, background beats, and sound sources. In an extended project, students could sample music and mix and merge styles into a unique composition/arrangement of their own.

Supplemental Resources:

Audacity sound editing software's web site and access to free download:
<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>

The online connection to the Andy Warhol Museum:
<http://www.warhol.org>

An online collection containing information and famous works by Andy Warhol:
<http://www.warhols.com>

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.

**“Life During Wartime”
by Talking Heads (1979)**

Heard of a van that is loaded with weapons,
packed up and ready to go
Heard of some gravesites, out by the highway,
a place where nobody knows
The sound of gunfire, off in the distance,
I’m getting used to it now
Lived in a brownstone, lived in the ghetto,
I’ve lived all over this town

This ain’t no party, this ain’t no disco,
this ain’t no fooling around
No time for dancing, or lovey dovey,
I ain’t got time for that now

Transmit the message, to the receiver,
hope for an answer some day
I got three passports, a couple of visas,
you don’t even know my real name
High on a hillside, the trucks are loading,
everything’s ready to roll
I sleep in the daytime, I work in the nighttime,
I might not ever get home

This ain’t no party, this ain’t no disco,
this ain’t no fooling around
This ain’t no mud club, or CBGB,
I ain’t got time for that now

Heard about Houston? Heard about Detroit?
Heard about Pittsburgh, P. A.?
You oughta know not to stand by the window
somebody might see you up there
I got some groceries, some peanut butter,
to last a couple of days
But I ain’t got no speakers, ain’t got no
headphones, ain’t got no records to play

Why stay in college? Why go to night school?
Gonna be different this time
Can’t write a letter, can’t send a postcard,
I can’t write nothing at all
This ain’t no party, this ain’t no disco,
this ain’t no fooling around
I’d like to kiss you, I’d love you hold you
I ain’t got no time for that now

Trouble in transit, got through the roadblock,
we blended with the crowd
We got computer, we're tapping phone lines,
I know that ain't allowed
We dress like students, we dress like housewives,
or in a suit and a tie
I changed my hairstyle, so many times now,
I don't know what I look like!

You make me shiver, I feel so tender,
we make a pretty good team
Don't get exhausted, I'll do some driving,
you ought to get some sleep
Get you instructions, follow directions,
then you should change your address
Maybe tomorrow, maybe the next day,
whatever you think is best

Burned all my notebooks, what good are
notebooks? They won't help me survive
My chest is aching, burns like a furnace,
the burning keeps me alive
Try to stay healthy, physical fitness,
don't want to catch no disease
Try to be careful, don't take no chances,
you better watch what you say



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 Paige Rose, University of Central Arkansas, Conway, Arkansas.