



## VH1 News Presents:

Soundtrack to War  
VH1 Music Studio  
Cable in the Classroom

Lesson for Music Classes, Grades 9-12

Lesson 2 - Music: A Uniting Force?

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 discuss what music means to them and how they might utilize it in difficult times.
- Students will gain an understanding of the role music plays during a crisis such as wartime.
- Students will discuss emotions associated with war and how music connects with these feelings.

### 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 relationship to history and culture.

## Materials

- VHS VCR Player
- Television
- VH1's *VH1 News Presents: Soundtrack to War*
- Web-based lesson materials
- Overhead projector
- Pencils/pens (students)
- Overhead transparency of Resource 2.1 (included with lesson)
- Copies of Resource 2.2 for individual student use (included with lesson)

## Procedures

1. Ask students to reflect on the question, "Why do humans make music?" After allowing them to briefly share ideas, show Resource 2.1, "Why do humans make music?," on the overhead projector for comparison. Guide them in discussing the reasons listed, and have them give an example of a song or musical genre that characterizes each. Ask students if they can think of any other reasons why humans make music and add them to the list, keeping it nearby for reference during later discussion.
2. As a class, have students discuss how they think they might feel as a soldier going into war. Write their ideas on the overhead or chalkboard for reference, and then guide them in further discussion. Why would a soldier make music while at war? Does music help people get through emotionally challenging situations like this? How?
3. Distribute student copies of Resource 2.2, Video Worksheet. Ask them to complete the video worksheet as they watch the program, adding their answers while viewing based on new things they see (for efficiency, it would be best to encourage note taking rather than answers in complete sentences).
4. Show VH1's *VH1 News Presents: Soundtrack to War* until about 20 minutes into the program (approximately the first half).
5. After watching the video, lead students in discussing the answers/notes they wrote on their worksheets (Resource 2.2). Ask them to comment on how the video made them feel, being an American citizen back at home. Did they gain better insight into the emotional impact of war on an individual on the frontlines? Were there any comments made by the soldiers that surprised them? Is the prevalence, and importance, of musical instruments, CDs, and radios among the soldiers in Iraq surprising to them?

6. Based on what they observed during the first half of the program, ask students to comment on whether they feel music plays an important role in this situation. Why or why not? Have them refer to the list created earlier in the lesson of the reasons that humans make music. Which of these are exemplified by the soldiers through their listening to, or making of, music?

### **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.

### **Resource 2.1 – VH1: Soundtrack to War**

#### **Why do humans make music?**

Emotion

Comfort

Creative Outlet

Self-Expression

Accomplishment

Personal Satisfaction

Sharing With Others

Convey Meaning

Tell a Story

Tradition

Comedy

## Resource 2.2 – VH1: Soundtrack to War

### Video Worksheet

While watching the first half of the movie, think about and answer the following questions:

1. What purposes do you see music serving throughout the video segment?
2. What do you think the quote, “war itself is heavy metal,” means?
3. If the soldiers did not have CD’s to listen to, do you think they would come up with other ways to experience music? List your ideas.
4. What do you think the female soldier who sings “Home of the Brave” is feeling? Why?



*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 Ann C. Clements, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Music Education Department, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, in collaboration with Elizabeth Fino-Radin, MME candidate*