



VH1 Ultimate Albums
Bob Marley – Legend Episode #3
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 recognize and describe elements of Bob Marley's life that influenced his song writing as evidenced in the song "No Woman No Cry".

Students will compare and contrast Reggae with current musical styles with which they are familiar.

Students will identify the elements of music characteristic of Reggae.

National Standards: 6 - Listening to, analyzing, and describing music; 9 - Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

Materials

VHS VCR Player

Television

VH1 Ultimate Albums, Bob Marley, Legend Episode #3, segment one

Web-based lesson materials

Audio recording of Bob Marley's "No Woman No Cry" and audio equipment

Lyric sheets for "No Woman No Cry"

Map of Jamaica, preferably large, to hang in front of class as a point of reference

Pencils and copies of guided listening questions for students

Procedures

1. Before students enter the room, have a directed listening prompt written on the board, such as "Listen carefully to the music being played. Describe the mood of this piece."
2. Have recording of Bob Marley's "No Woman No Cry" playing as students enter the classroom. Prompt them to directed listening and provide a lyric sheet.
3. At the end of the piece, ask students to share their thoughts about what they have just heard. What style of music is it (Reggae)? What is the probable country of origin, and why?
4. Share with students the name of the performer and title of the song, and tell them that Bob Marley was from Jamaica and was one of the most prominent musicians of the 20th century.
5. Ask students to comment, based on the song they have just listened to and the lyric sheet, on what Jamaica must have been like in the 1970's. Have students share their thoughts, but don't reveal any answers – have them wait and see if they are correct.
6. Hand out guided listening sheet for students to complete while watching the program (see below).
7. Show VH1 Ultimate Albums, Bob Marley, first segment.
8. Lead students in a historical discussion of Jamaica, focusing on the political situation during the 1960's and 70's. Why was Jamaica so oppressed? What country ruled Jamaica until 1962? Why did Britain move out? (NOTE: This lesson could provide an opportunity for interdisciplinary activities by coordinating with the students' history or government teacher.) Have students share their thoughts about how they feel when considering the concept of no security in their country or neighborhood. What areas of our country are they familiar with that reflect or at one time reflected what Trenchtown must have resembled at that time (e.g. Southern LA,

Harlem)?

9. Guide students in discussing the roots of Bob Marley's music. Why was music so important to Marley and his friends, Bunny and Pete? Why was it so important to all of the oppressed people of Jamaica? What musical style did Bob Marley largely establish (Reggae)?

10. Ask students to compare the elements of Reggae to those of the music they listen to today. Have them describe the characteristics of rhythm, melody, tempo, instrumentation, etc. for the musical styles they are familiar with, and write their comments on the board. Have them do the same with Reggae, listing the characteristics on the board. What makes Reggae musically different from the music they listen to today? Ask students to describe the lyrics of today's music, and that of Reggae, and discuss the ways in which they are lyrically similar.

The origins of reggae are found in Mento, Jamaica's Cuban-inflected calypso music that dates from the late 19th century. Mento was a celebratory, rural folk form that served its largely rural audience as dance music. With urban migration and social changes that accompanied industrialization, it developed into faster, electrified dance music. Eventually it developed to include instrumentations of swing bands and elements of rhythm and blues, developing a native rhythm called Ska. This ska evolved with the use of electric bass as an important instrument and monochromatic guitar figures, coming to be known as reggae. Lead singer Frederick 'Toots' Hibbert is credited with titling this form of music, defining the term as: 'Reggae just mean comin' from the people, an everyday thing, like from the ghetto. When you say reggae you mean regular, majority. And when you say reggae it means poverty, suffering, Rastafari, everything in the ghetto. It's music from the rebels, people who don't have what they want.'

- Adapted from the New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians

11. Lead students in a discussion about why an artist might gravitate toward, or choose, a particular style of music to convey their message. What musical elements in Reggae helped Bob Marley to communicate his message? Why would an artist "choose" one style over another (heritage, cultural influences, etc.)?

To close the lesson, have students put away their completed guided listening sheets, and ask them questions directly from the sheet. Use a reward system of your choice for the students who answer the questions correctly.

Guided Listening Sheet:

1. Bob Marley was Reggae's ambassador of _____. (hope)
2. Marley used his music to rail against _____, pray for _____, and unite the oppressed beneath a banner of _____. (racism, peace, love)
3. He was only _____ when he was laid to rest. (36)
4. In what year did Jamaica gain independence from Great Britain? (1962)
5. Why did Great Britain give up rule in Jamaica? (money)
6. Did Bob Marley have a mother and father that he lived with? (no, he was passed from family member to family member)
7. What was the name of his "government yard", or 'hood? (Trenchtown)
8. In 1963, Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, and Bunny Wailer formed a group called _____. (The Wailers)
9. Discouraged, Bob retreated to the rustic mountains of _____, his original home. (Nine Mile)
10. What did he do a lot of while he was there? (Song writing)

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 written by MENC member Renee Gabel, General/Choral Music, Ridley Middle School, Ridley Park, PA.