



## ***VH1 Rock Honors: The Who***

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

## **Objectives**

- Students will articulate how the elements of a popular song (form, instrumentation, lyrics) reflect the society in which the song is written.
- Students will articulate the similarities and differences between the culture of the 1960's and that of today.

### **National Standards for music education:**

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 Rock Honors: The Who*
- Lyric sheets for “Young Man Blues,” “Can You See the Real Me,” “Behind Blue Eyes,” and “My Generation” (provided below)
- Audio playback equipment (CD player, iPod with speakers, etc.)
- Original recording of The Who’s “My Generation,” available through iTunes and/or Amazon.com

### **Prior Knowledge:**

Students should be able to recognize the sound of various acoustic and electronic instruments; identify a theme or tune; understand the concepts of melody, harmony, rhythm, and texture; have a cursory knowledge of the events and culture of the 1960’s.

## Procedures

1. Prior to the start of class, write the descriptor list used in the previous lesson on the board. These descriptors are taken from video segment 1:21- 2:38: disaffected youth; broke barriers; heartfelt; power; vital; free-thinking; notorious; explosive; integrity. Begin the lesson by reviewing this list with the students.
2. Cue video segment 4:08-8:16. Remind students that they saw this segment in the last lesson and they were at that time asked to pay close attention to the instrumentation. Have students follow the lyric sheet (see below) for “Young Man Blues” as they watch the segment a second time. Discuss the lyrics and vocals in a general way. Did they relate to the descriptors? How so?
3. Cue video segment 14:50 - 16:51. After viewing the footage and comments, use the following questions to guide a discussion on what was seen and heard:
  - The Who’s publicist Pete Meaden, and his advice, are discussed. How does fashion and publicity influence music today?
  - Does style take on greater importance over substance, or are the two inter-connected?
  - Does the greater stratification of music (pop, hip-hop, alternative, emo) today impact who receives the music’s message and how it is received?
  - Regardless of genre, is today’s music “for kids, by kids?” Why or why not? How do young artists such as Miley Cyrus and The Jonas Brothers fit into that statement? Why is there a corporate influence today? Was it present in the 1960’s?

- Compare Roger Daltrey’s statement about the band’s goal to be rich and famous. Is that goal contradictory to the descriptor list used in the opening segment? Can popular music have integrity and be commercially viable? Why or why not?
4. Cue video segments 43:23 - 44:35 (Sean Penn’s introduction of Pearl Jam and the music from “Quadraphenia”) and 50:00 - 53:20 (Pearl Jam performance of “Can You See the Real Me”). Have students follow along with the lyric sheet while viewing the performance. Ask the students to also take note of the instrumentation they hear. Use these questions to guide a discussion of the following:
- Is the protagonist of this a song one of the era’s “disaffected youth?”
  - How is that disaffectedness represented musically?
  - Horns have been added to the instrumentation of the rock band? How does this enhance or detract from the message?
  - Why did The Who twice venture into the rock opera format? What did it enable them to do musically?
5. Cue video segment 18:37 - 22:13 (The Who’s performance of “Behind Blue Eyes”). Again, have students follow along with the provided lyric sheets. Discuss how the music and lyrics do not necessarily go together. Why might this be? Ask students to think of any songs from the last several years that paint a similar picture of isolation, referring to any repeatable lyrics they may remember. What is the universality of isolation and feelings of being misunderstood? Can students come up with any other universal themes in music, popular or otherwise?
- Extension: Explore listening to student-suggested songs. Further discuss instrumentation and how it reinforces or diffuses the lyrical content.
6. Cue video segment 22:20 - 26:50 (The Who’s performance of “My Generation”). Once again, have students follow lyric sheet. Ask them to note any discrepancies. Ask students about the discrepancies found—with lyrics such as “still here today” and “maybe we’re in the way.” Has Roger Daltrey made this song applicable to “his generation?” What is the implication of his new lyric, especially in relation to the guitar solo? Compare this performance with an original recording. How did it differ musically? Is there a significance of the stutter performed in the song?”
7. Conclude class by assigning students to find current musical examples that represent “their generation.” How do they differ musically from past generations? What element makes them different and unique to their generation? Is it the lyrics, the form, or the instrumentation?

## **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.

## **“Young Man Blues”**

Well a young man  
He ain't got nothin' in the world these days  
I said a young man  
Ain't got nothin' in the world these days

In the old days  
When a young man was a strong man  
All the people stepped back  
When a young man walked by

You know nowadays  
Well it's the old man's  
Got all the money  
And a young man  
Ain't got nothin' in the world these days

You know nowadays, if you're the young man  
You ain't got nothin' in the world these days

## **“The Real Me”**

I went back to the doctor  
To get another shrink.  
I sit and tell him about my weekend,  
But he never betrays what he thinks.

Can you see the real me, doctor?

I went back to my mother  
I said, “I’m crazy ma, help me.”  
She said, “I know how it feels son,  
‘Cause it runs in the family.”

Can you see the real me, mother?

The cracks between the paving stones  
Look like rivers of flowing veins.  
Strange people who know me  
Peeping from behind every window pane.  
The girl I used to love  
Lives in this yellow house.  
Yesterday she passed me by,  
She doesn’t want to know me now.

Can you see the real me, can you?

I ended up with the preacher,  
Full of lies and hate,  
I seemed to scare him a little  
So he showed me to the golden gate.

Can you see the real me preacher?  
Can you see the real me doctor?  
Can you see the real me mother?  
Can you see the real me?

## **“Behind Blue Eyes”**

No one knows what it's like to be the bad man  
To be the sad man behind blue eyes  
No one knows what it's like  
To be hated, to be fated to telling only lies

But my dreams, they aren't as empty  
As my conscience seems to be  
I have hours, only lonely  
My love is vengeance that's never free

No one knows what it's like  
To feel these feelings like I do and I blame you!  
No one bites back as hard on their anger  
None of my pain and woe can show through

But my dreams, they aren't as empty  
As my conscience seems to be  
I have hours only lonely  
My love is vengeance, that's never free

When my fist clenches, crack it open  
Before I use it and lose my cool  
When I smile, tell me some bad news  
Before I laugh and act like a fool

And If I swallow anything evil  
Put your finger down my throat  
And If I shiver, please give me a blanket  
Keep me warm, let me wear your coat

No one knows what it's like to be the bad man  
To be the sad man behind blue eyes

## **“My Generation”**

People try to put us d-down (Talkin' 'bout my generation)  
Just because we get around (Talkin' 'bout my generation)  
Things they do look awful c-c-cold (Talkin' 'bout my generation)  
I hope I die before I get old (Talkin' 'bout my generation)

This is my generation  
This is my generation, baby

Why don't you all f-fade away (Talkin' 'bout my generation)  
And don't try to dig what we all s-s-say (Talkin' 'bout my generation)  
I'm not trying to cause a big s-s-sensation (Talkin' 'bout my generation)  
I'm just talkin' 'bout my g-g-g-generation (Talkin' 'bout my generation)

This is my generation  
This is my generation, baby

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Things they do look awful c-c-cold (Talkin' 'bout my generation)  
Yeah, I hope I die before I get old (Talkin' 'bout my generation)

This is my generation  
This is my generation, baby



*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 Marcia Marino, Oakland Public Schools, Oakland, New Jersey.*