



storytellers

## VH1 Storytellers: The Dixie Chicks

VH1 Music Studio  
Cable in the Classroom

Lesson for Music Classes, Grades 7-12  
Lesson 3

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 explore the connection with music as a personal journal to your life.
- Students will better understand the way in which music affects listeners and creators emotionally.
- Students will explore the elements of music through critical listening and a lyrical analysis of a work by the Dixie Chicks.

#### 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 *Storytellers: The Dixie Chicks*
- Pencils and paper
- Student copies of the lyric sheet to “Silent House” (provided below)

### **Prior Knowledge:**

- Students have knowledge about Alzheimer’s disease and its effects.
- Students will have watched VH1 *Storytellers: The Dixie Chicks* in its entirety and completed Lesson 1 and/or 2.
- Students have a basic knowledge of the elements of music, including pitch, dynamics, tempo, timbre, duration, and silence.

## Procedures

1. Cue the second segment of VH1 *Storytellers: The Dixie Chicks*.
2. Lead a class discussion about how the band discusses family members with Alzheimer’s disease and how this was an inspiration for the song. Do students relate to this in any way?
3. Student Activity #1: Distribute the song lyric sheet below. Review the song lyrics as the students listen and pick specific lines that relate to the disease or the band’s personal experiences to enhance critical listening.
4. Discuss how the music makes the listener feel. Ask students the following questions:
  - Do the changes in dynamics denote more important aspects of the song?
  - What is the most repeated line of the song, what is the relevance of this?
5. Evaluate the music in terms of aesthetic quality, and how it evokes feelings and emotions.
6. Analyze and describe the uses of musical elements, such as pitch, dynamics, tempo, timbre, duration, and silence in this song that make it unique, interesting, and expressive.

### **Extensions**

- Students should be encouraged to find recordings, which have unique, interesting or expressive material.

## **Supplemental Resources:**

- [www.dixiechicks.com](http://www.dixiechicks.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.

## **"Silent House"**

**Copyright The Dixie Chicks**

These walls have eyes  
Rows of photographs  
And faces like mine  
Who do we become  
Without knowing where  
We started from  
It's true I'm missing you  
As I stand alone in your room

Everyday that will pass you by  
Every name that you won't recall  
Everything that you made by hand  
Everything that you know by heart

And I will try to connect  
All the pieces you left  
I will carry it on  
And let you forget  
And I'll remember the years  
When your mind was clear  
How the laughter and life  
Filled up this silent house  
One room  
Two single beds  
In the closet hangs  
Your favorite dress  
The books that you read  
Are in scattered piles  
Of paper shreds

Everything that you made by hand  
Everything that you know by heart  
And I will try to connect  
All the pieces you left  
I will carry it on  
And let you forget  
And I'll remember the years  
When your mind was clear  
How the laughter and life  
Filled up this silent house  
Silent house

In the garden off the living room  
A chill fills the air  
And the lilies bloom

And I will try to connect  
All the pieces you left  
I will carry it on  
And let you forget  
And I'll remember the years  
When your mind was clear  
How the laughter and life  
Filled up this

And I will try to connect  
All the pieces you left  
I will carry it on  
And let you forget  
And I'll remember the years  
When your mind was clear  
How the laughter and life  
Filled up this silent house

Silent house



*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 Helen A. Krofchick, Music Educator, Doby's Mill School, Elgin, South Carolina.*