



storytellers

VH1 Storytellers: Mary J. Blige

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.

Objectives

- Students will listen to accompanying music to popular songs and compare them to other source material.
- Students will understand the concept of sampling and its historical significance.
- Students will research other styles of music.

National Standards for music education:

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

- Television
- VCR/DVR/TiVO/DVD player
- Audio playback equipment
- VH1 *Storytellers: Mary J Blige*
- Two copies of the Song Comparison Worksheet (provided below) for each student
- Recordings available through iTunes or Amazon.com:
 - Bach: Prelude in C
 - Bach/Gounod: Ave Maria
 - “What You Won’t do for Love”
 - “Theme from ‘The Young and the Restless’”

Prior Knowledge:

- Students have basic listening skills and understand basic musical concepts, including instruments, harmony, melody, rhythm, and form.

Procedures

1. Before class, write on the board: “Define Sampling.” Students should read and prepare to answer at the start of class.
2. Discuss the definition of “sampling.” Sampling is the use of already existing source material to create a new composition. Discuss the most common use of sampling -- hip-hop and R&B music.
3. Play the recording of the Bach Prelude in C, and then compare it to the recording of the Bach/Gounod Ave Maria. Indicate how Gounod simply took the Bach prelude, used it as an accompaniment and composed a melody above it.
4. Distribute the Song Comparison Worksheet (below) to students. Briefly explain the following six categories:
 - a. SOUND – Instruments used to make the music
 - b. HARMONY – Accompaniment
 - c. MELODY – Distinctive tune that defines the song.
 - d. EMOTION – Feelings and scenarios evoked in the listener
 - e. RHYTHM – Tempo and other rhythmic elements to the music
 - f. FORM – Structure and genre of this piece
5. Play the recording of “The Young and the Restless.” Have students write descriptive words next to the six categories as they apply to the song.

6. Play the video starting with the song “No More Drama.” Have the students fill out the other column for this song.
7. Lead a class discussion about the two recordings. Students should refer to their notes to discuss the similarities and differences between the two songs.
8. Play the video starting with the song “Real Love.” On a second handout, have students write descriptive words next to the six categories as they apply to the song. Ask if anyone recognizes this accompaniment and if they can identify what it is.
9. Play them “What You Won’t do for Love.” Note differences and similarities.
10. For homework, students should list other examples of sampling from classical and popular music. They should research and identify the original song that was sampled.

Supplemental Resources:

- Official Mary J. Blige website: <http://www.mjblige.com/>
- Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary_J._Blige

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.

Song Comparison Worksheet

NAME: _____

Category _____ Song 1: _____ Song 2: _____

SOUND –

HARMONY –

MELODY –

EMOTION –

RHYTHM –

FORM –



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 Carl J. Ferrara, Edmund W. Miles Middle School, Amityville, NY.