



storytellers

VH1 Storytellers: Mary J. Blige

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 identify instruments often used in a rock and/or pop band.
- Students will identify the role each instrument plays in the performance 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.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performances.

Materials

- Television
- VCR/DVR/TiVO/DVD player
- VH1 *Storytellers: Mary J. Blige*

Prior Knowledge:

- Students should be familiar with different musical instrument families.

Procedures

1. Discuss with students the instrumentation of an average rock band or pop group. List the instruments that are often used on the board.
2. Discuss the role each instrument plays in the performance:
 - a) Drums : Keep tempo and establish rhythmic “groove”
 - b) Bass Guitar: Establishes root of the chords, and adds to “groove”
 - c) Guitar: Plays harmonic chords and adds to rhythmic “groove”
 - d) Piano and keyboards: Plays harmonic chords and adds texture and simulates other instruments.
 - e) Vocalists: Perform melody and text of the song. Back-up singers punctuate phrases and add harmony.
3. Start the VH1 *Storytellers: Mary J. Blige* program at the beginning. Have students identify the instrumentation used in Mary J. Blige’s band. Is she using any instruments that we did not list, and if so, what are their roles?
4. Either with “Just Fine” or with another song from the program, pick out the part that each instrument plays. Listen to the part at first. Have the class sing it. For rhythm instruments, students can tap out the rhythms on their desks, chairs, etc.
5. Once they have established the parts, assign each simulated part to a small group, and have them sing and/or play the parts together.
6. Discuss how each part contributed to this song specifically. Remember, the goal is not to have a performed a piece of music in its entirety, but rather to pick out each part of an accompaniment.

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.



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.