

Learning Segment: School songs

The following is an overview of the unit on school songs. The lessons included in this unit can be adapted for any age group in K-12; however the time needed for the preparation of learning and introduction of new material will vary depending on the age, the number of students, and the time allotted for each class period. The lesson plans in this segment are general guidelines for the procedure of the lesson. In addition, I have included suggestions for adapting these lesson plans to the elementary (K-4), middle (5-8), and high school (9-12) classes.

Subject:

The instructional segment focuses on the history, aesthetic elements, and performance of school songs in the music classroom.

National Music Standards:

Standard 4: Composing and arranging music with specified guidelines.

Standard 5: Reading and notating music.

Standard 6: Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.

Standard 8: Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.

Standard 9: Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

Common Core Anchor Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.9: Draw evidence from literacy or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

Context:

Due to the subject matter of these lessons, their placement in the context of the yearly curriculum is not designated. Students should have an understanding of the definitions of

rhythm and melody in order to fully grasp the content of the lesson. In addition, this could be the students' first interaction with primary sources, especially in the music classroom.

Rationale:

The purpose of this lesson segment is three-fold. First, it is intended to engage students with primary sources. Research has shown that inquiry-based learning benefits the student in helping to develop mental schemas, establish critical thinking skills, and form scholarly habits.¹ The implementation of primary sources into the curriculum reflects the inquiry-based learning model by encouraging students to evaluate and develop further questions about these materials. Second, this lesson aims to teach students about the history and style of music. The use of primary sources in these lessons will encourage students to engage with original manuscripts that hold historical significance musically and culturally. In addition to the physical differences and variances in compositional writing, students will also learn about the aesthetic comparisons specific to the compositional style. It is critical that students understand the characteristics that define musical style. Furthermore, student engagement with this history will allow them to recognize the interdisciplinary element of music. Finally, these lessons seek to reinforce academic language specific to the music classroom. This is particularly important for students in the younger grade levels in order to promote and maintain musical literacy.

Objectives:

Upon the completion of the learning segment, the students will:

- be able to identify valuable questions used in evaluating and understanding primary sources
- be able to draw conclusions about a collection of primary sources that are of related materials
- be able to identify musical elements that characterize a typical school song (tempo, meter, rhythm, dynamic, etc.)
- be able to identify inter-disciplinary applications of music via its connections to literacy (identifying and learning vocabulary words in the lyrics), and history
- practice composing both the music and the lyrics
- be able to perform one song individually or with others

Academic Language²

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|
| • Evaluate | • Genre | • March |
| • Manuscript | • Aesthetics or
Characteristics | • Dynamic |
| • Collection | • Forte | • Tempo |
| • Primary Sources | • Piano | • Time Signature |
| • Secondary Sources | • Staccato | • Beat |
| • Fight Songs/School
Songs | • Legato | • Pulse |

¹ Hendry, J. (2007). Primary Sources in K-12 Education: Opportunities for Archives. *The American Archivist*, 7(1), 118-119.

² The academic language is likely to vary dependent on the age and skill level of the classroom; this comprehensive list includes terminology that is probable for instruction throughout the learning segment.

Pre-Planning & Materials

Prior to the start of the learning segment, gather the primary sources suitable to evaluate in a classroom setting. It is appropriate to contact your local or regional historical society, local archives, or area schools for these sources. It is advisable to initiate a relationship with the archivist (if applicable) to help search for and find these materials. Depending on the institution from which you find your sources, you may need to plan a class field trip to the archives or plan for the archivist to visit the school. Often times, these collections cannot be lent out to patrons. Although it is likely possible to create digital images of the materials, this may detract from learning experience as students will not get to touch or view the documents closely.

The following materials will be used in the learning unit:

- 4-5 manuscripts of school songs
- 4-5 printed copies of the manuscript. These can be created via composing software such as Sibelius, Finale, or MuseScore if necessary.
- Activity Worksheets (See individual lesson plans and supplemental materials)
- Archival gloves (used when handling primary documents). If gloves are unavailable, sheet use sheet protectors or another means of protecting sources. Note: It is appropriate to consult the archivist about the protection of these documents.
- Magnifying glasses (optional)
- Pencils
- Paper
- Computer and projector
- Power Point
- Document Camera
- Recordings of school songs
- Media player
- Pictures of where school songs are heard (optional)
- Instruments & appropriate mallets —Depending on the class, this could include percussion instruments, Orff instruments, or band instruments.

Adaptations for Diverse Learners

Students with cognitive, emotional, or behavioral disorders or students who have individual education plans (IEP) may need assistance in successfully completing the learning objectives of this learning segment. Print copies of the manuscripts will be made available for students who have difficulty reading or have visual impairments. Student groups will be pre selected to facilitate peer teaching for these students when appropriate. Paraprofessionals will be present and available for students who require their assistance.

Management Goal

This lesson incorporates very valuable and delicate sources. Before allowing students to engage with such sources, rules and consequences will be established on the procedures of handling materials. The rules and consequences will follow those established in the classroom and in the school building. Stations will be set up around the room with clear pathways for the teacher to have quick access to each station and each student. There will only be four to five students at each station, giving students an adequate opportunity to view the object. No food or drink will be allowed when working with these sources; a table or bin will be set up directly outside of the classroom for students to place their water bottles or snacks until after class.

Overview of each lesson

Lesson 1—Introduction and Student Inquiry

In this lesson, students will have the opportunity to play “detective.” Stations will be set up around the room with a manuscript of a school song at each station. Students will be able to look at, touch, discuss with peers, and ask questions about these documents as they rotate around to each station. At the end of the lesson, the teacher will reveal to the students what these documents are and their purpose for the learning segment.

Lesson 2—History and Musical Aesthetics

In this lesson, a brief history of school songs will be presented. Students will also learn about the musical elements that characterize a typical school song. This includes elements such as rhythms, meter, tempo, dynamics, melodies, harmonies, form, or text.

Lesson 3—Our School Song

In this final lesson, students will learn our school song, comparing it to the school songs they looked at and heard. Students will learn how to sing and/or play each of the songs and compare the musical aesthetics present in each.

The additional pages provide specific procedures for the three lessons in this learning segment.

