

Aim: For special needs students to assist in creating a music history and performance journal. The content of the journal will be based on the study of songs and instrumental music from various periods of American history; i.e. the Colonial Era, the Civil War and Westward Expansion

Time frame: ongoing

Topics covered: Music, Social Studies, Literacy

Objectives

- To promote music appreciation through listening and performance activities.
- To promote an understanding of the historical context of events and people connected to the songs and music.
- To have students identify the historical context of musical instruments or lyrics associated with a song.
- To promote self esteem by having students contribute their work sheets, certificates of achievement, performance pictures, art work and insights (both written and verbal).
- To promote vocal and instrumental performance achievement.
- To promote greater independence in using a computer by having students help download pictures related to songs. (i.e. pictures of John Philip Sousa for The Stars and Stripes Forever)

Suggestions for Teacher Preparation

- Gather material related to this journal prior to introducing this project to classes.
- Use an internet search engine to find specific information about a song; i.e. 'America the Beautiful' will bring up many sites. Information about the composers, lyricists and events leading up to and surrounding songs are frequently found in articles that contain pictures and quotations related to the creation of the song.
- Organize a web browser 'favorites' folder for easy access to project related web sites.
- Materials might include pictures from 'bulletin board sets' sold at Teacher Choice stores, catalogues, or history magazines such as Smithsonian and other periodicals.
- Pictures should include presidents, composers, poets, and other historical figures related to the songs; i.e. Julia Ward Howe, President Lincoln and Harriet Tubman for 'The Battle Hymn of the Republic'.
- Pictures related to regions and landscapes of America; i.e. mountains with purple tops for 'America the Beautiful.'
- Maps of America, then and now, may be found on the internet.
- Pictures of fashions, then and now. Typing in search words such as 'Colonial America' is a good way to find web sites with pictures that can be downloaded.
- Pictures of instruments related to a song; i.e. a banjo for 'Oh, Susannah', and a Native American drum for songs performed by Louis Mofsie (a contemporary native American composer and performer).
- Quotations of important historical figures related to the music; i.e. President Lincoln's letter written to song writer George F. Root regarding 'The Battle Cry of Freedom.'
- Student assessments such as lyric sheets and work sheets should be ready for class work and homework.

Suggested Activities for Students

- **Listen to audio CD recordings related to journal.**
- **Indicate with a comment or gesture if they like a song, a picture, or a recording.**
- **Sing melodies and harmony on syllables or words.**
- **Learn lyrics to the songs or sing part of the melody.**
- **Play melodies and harmonies by ear on a pitched instrument; i.e. piano or xylophone.**
- **Create and/or imitate rhythms by syllable singing, clapping or playing an instrument.**
- **Conduct student practice and performance.**
- **Play percussion instruments to the songs, marches, dances studied.**
- **Help choose and download pictures from the computer**
- **Read anecdotes, quotes, stories from the journal.**
- **Locate places on the maps in the journal (with or without assistance).**
- **Contribute homework and class worksheets to the journal.**
- **Paste articles, work, etc. into the journal with or without hand over hand assistance.**
- **Hold the book up for others to view.**
- **Make up songs that relate to important people and events in the journal.**
- **Answer simple who, what, where, when questions related to pictures, articles, etc.**

Levels of functioning

Students of all challenges will be able to participate in this project. It is important to always have an open mind when having students participate in music. There may be some wonderful hidden abilities that a long term project can bring out. . Here are a few examples of possibilities.

- **High functioning students can write articles related to the music history of a piece.**
- **High or middle functioning students can play the piece on the piano or other instruments.**
- **Middle functioning students can learn some of the lyrics and play percussion.**
- **Lower functioning students can point to the pictures in the book with assistance,**
- **Lower functioning students can sing syllables on a few notes of a song melody.**

Some Suggested Songs and Music

- Hail to the Chief
- The Liberty Bell March
- The Stars and Stripes Forever
- The Star Spangled Banner
- America the Beautiful
- The Air Force Anthem
- Anchors Aweigh
- The Marine Hymn
- The Caissons Go Rolling Along
- Breeze From Alabama (a Scott Joplin Ragtime work)
- The Battle Cry of Freedom
- The Battle Hymn of the Republic
- Coyote Warrior (modern Native American instrumental music)
- Mohican Dream (modern Native American instrumental music)
- I Walk in Beauty (Navajo dance)
- God Bless America
- Oh, Susannah
- Beautiful Dreamer
- The Invincible Eagle (a Sousa march)
- This Land is Your Land
- Swing Low Sweet Chariot

Suggested Original Song Topics for Classroom Music Creation

- George Washington
- Abraham Lincoln
- Harriet Tubman
- Frederick Douglas

CD Recordings

- 100 Favorite Patriotic Songs
- Mormon Tabernacle Choir Stars and Stripes Forever
- America's Finest Inspiring Patriotic Songs
- Aaron Copland Portrait of Lincoln
- Moving Within the Circle (traditional Native American music)

Music Book Editions

- Patriotic Music Fact Book (resource Friendship House Catalogue)
- Moving Within the Circle (resource West Music Catalogue)

Piano Editions

- Dover Edition; John Philip Sousa's Great Marches in Piano Transcription
- Dover Edition; Joplin Piano Ragtime Music

Musical Instruments and Materials

- Sound shape drums (excellent to assist physically challenged students).
- Assorted drums including Native American.
- Native American chimes.
- Triangles.
- Bells; some adapted by being attached to thick bouquets of artificial red, white and blue plastic flowers to assist physically challenged students.
- Tambourines, shakers, wooden and shell rattles, rhythm sticks, cymbals.
- Guitars.
- Pianos.
- Tape recorder and cassettes to record student practice and performance.

Additional Materials

- Large sheets of construction paper if the book is to be made out of construction paper. A photo album can also be used and pictures can be nicely framed on colored paper.
- Glue sticks or scotch tape.
- Child safety scissors.
- Stickers and glitter.
- Magazines, catalogues, picture catalogues to cut up for pictures.
- Internet articles and pictures to be cut up.
- Maps from the internet or from bulletin board sets.
- Pictures from bulletin board sets (presidents, monuments, music).
- Student work sheets.
- Student compositions or comments.
- Index cards with quotations from important historical figures such as composers, song writers, presidents.

Sample Suggestions for the Music History Journal Entries

The Battle Cry of Freedom

- pictures of President Lincoln,
- pictures of President Grant,
- sample quotes from President Lincoln letter to song writer George Root
- samples of student lyric work sheets
- pictures of Frederic Douglas
- pictures of Harriet Tubman

America the Beautiful

- picture of Katherine Lee Bates
- picture of Pikes Peak
- one paragraph biography of Katherine Lee Bates (can be copied over by a student)
- beautiful pictures of various American landscapes from a calendar
- a copy of all seven verses of the song
- a map of the U.S. with teacher comments indicating oceans referred to by lines “from sea to shining sea”

Coyote Warrior

- **pictures of coyotes**
- **listing of facts about coyotes**
- **article re: coyote as state mascot for South Dakota**
- **pictures of Native American artifacts**
- **pictures of Native American musical instruments**
- **pictures of Native American dancers**
- **a paragraph about the function of music in Native American culture**

This Land is Your Land

- **picture of Woody Guthrie with a paragraph about his parents and grandparents**
- **map of U.S. with indicators of places mentioned in the song**
- **samples of student work (how many words were sung)**

Home on the Range

- **pictures of buffalo, deer and antelope downloaded from the internet**
- **pictures of Native American art showing buffalo, deer and other wildlife**
- **pictures of terrain described in the song**

Hail to the Chief

- **pictures of the Presidential Seal and various Presidents whose presidencies were related to the song.**
- **pictures of President Truman with the quote “The buck stops here”**
- **anecdote of President Truman’s success at making this the official entrance music for the President**
- **student work sheets related to the song**
- **small article describing the history of the song**

Further Suggestions:

- **The teacher can write out the music notation for parts of the song and show the directionality of pitch to the students and/or how the words match the notes.**
- **The teacher can play recordings of the students playing and singing the songs as the related pages are displayed.**
- **Students can participate in an assembly/workshop where they perform the songs in the book as they read anecdotes and show pictures and artifacts related to the music.**