

Jazz as Black History: Teaching African American History Through Musicology

Matthew Menschner

Overview

Rationale

Background

Objectives

Strategies

Classroom Activities/Lesson Plans

Bibliography/Resources

Content Standards

Overview

This curriculum unit will focus on African American history in the 20th century as it relates to the development of Jazz and its various styles from the early 20th to the mid-20th century. The target audience for this unit will be a diverse group of tenth grade students, however, it may be adapted for use in eleventh and twelfth grade history classes as well. While United States History is the intended course that this unit will be taught in, it could be modified for a music or cultural studies course. This unit will not only focus on the creation and development of various styles across the realm of jazz music, but also the cultural and historical implications of the music on black history and artistic expression. The time frame of the unit will be a one to two-week period, in which the students will participate in various activities such as reading, writing, research, listening, speaking, reflecting, and more. The unit is best used to supplement more traditional history units on African American history, slavery, the Civil War, etc.

During this unit, the students will undertake a number of instructional tasks and activities focused around jazz genres. The students will analyze and think critically about the different elements of genre, learn about famous jazz musicians, and explore their own definitions of music and what it means to them.

Rationale

I work at a small neighborhood high school in Kensington, Philadelphia. The school population is comprised of 70% Latino students, 25% African American students and 5% listed as “other.” Many students at the school feel disconnected with their cultural history, often extolling that continually learning about world & American history does

not pertain to their own interests and ideas of identity. This unit aims to assuage some of these negative feelings and reconnect students with their own ethnic history by demonstrating the impact of music on said history. The unit will explore the history and development of cultural music by listening to jazz and studying its evolution and impact. The early roots of jazz music, the Jazz Age, Swing and Bebop will be critically analyzed disseminated. The sociopolitical effects of African American music on modern history are undeniable. It is time to give voice to the past in the same way modern music has given voice to those who have been systematically stifled.

The approach to this unit is one of reflection and discovery; students will be asked to challenge their own conceptions of what music and genre are and how they have evolved throughout a targeted historical period. There are ample opportunities in this unit for discovery and reflection. Students should be critically assessing their own ideas as they learn new information throughout the unit.

Background

“African American music is one of the treasures of the United States. Spirituals, ragtime, the blues, jazz, rhythm and blues, gospel, soul and hip hop – among other styles – are some of the richest and most distinct products of our national culture.” – Burton W. Peretti, *Lift Every Voice: The History of African American Music*

The Early Roots of Jazz Music

The roots of jazz can be traced back to New Orleans, Louisiana in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Developed from blues and ragtime, jazz has proven to be a resilient genre that has spawned many subgenres and redefinitions over the course of its continuing lifespan. Born to a city that, at the time, was wracked by political corruption and rapid economic decline, it is amazing that New Orleans produced something with such vigor and staying-power when the city appeared to be on the brink of self-cannibalization. Historians trace the beginnings of jazz to Storyville, a red-light district in New Orleans that had a short lifespan of only two decades. Storyville was founded in 1897, and this two-decade existence provided enough time for the roots of jazz to be planted. (Gioia 29)

Myriad musical styles existed in early-20th century New Orleans, at a time when musical and racial identity were both developing. European musical tradition was very strong within the local black Creole culture in New Orleans. This, combined with traditional West African cultural and musical expression blended in a manner that would later form the foundations for jazz music. Many black Creoles were freed from bondage before the official abolition of slavery in the south, and partially as a result, disassociated themselves with enslaved and non-Creole blacks. Louisiana legislation in 1894 designated anyone of African descent as a negro, slashing the classist and racist barriers that black Creoles had upheld for so long. Creole musicians were, generally speaking,

better trained musicians than their black counterparts from uptown. Trained in the classics and skilled at reading music, Creoles were now forced to compete with their uptown counterparts for work; counterparts whose “hotter” sound would eventually incorporate many aspects of the Creole tradition. This unwilling mixture of cultures resulted in the eventual birth of what would later become jazz. (Gioia 31-32)

Buddy Bolden is often cited as the “father” of jazz music. Many famous early jazz musicians built on the groundwork laid by Bolden. Louis Armstrong, an uptown-er and Creoles Sidney Bechet & Jelly Roll Morton were some of the most notable jazz musicians; they were instrumental in the early foundations of the genre. It is important for students to understand the background of jazz as it is heavily-laden with historical and racial implications. The prehistory of jazz will be a major focus in the beginning of the unit. It ties in very well with the Civil War, Reconstruction and a number of other topics within the content standards in the School District of Philadelphia. There will be ample opportunities for connections between previous or future history curriculum units.

The Jazz Age

African American popular music had taken on a new face by the 1920s. Jazz was beginning to form a significant identity in cities such as New Orleans, Chicago and New York. Ragtime and the Blues had begun to decline in popularity, however, their complex polyrhythms had melded with harmonies and piano techniques further supporting the black and European mixture that would form the basis for jazz music. Ragtime’s popularity declined rapidly in 1920. Jazz blended ragtime’s instrumental complexity and virtuosity with blues harmonies and timbres. The musicians behind the jazz movement became some of the most celebrated African Americans of this period in history. (Peretti 57-77)

The legacy of the uptown blacks and Creoles of Louisiana were continually pushed forward by legends of the genre such as Louis Armstrong, Jelly Roll Morton and Duke Ellington. In the 1920s, jazz bands developed as groups of musicians usually numbering five to seven members. The 20s ushered in the age of the soloist, largely due to Louis Armstrong. In November of 1925, Louis Armstrong created music that cemented his place in history as a jazz legend. Armstrong shifted the focus of the music from the ensemble to the soloist. Armstrong’s contributions to jazz are immeasurable, not just as a trumpet player, but as a singer as well. (Gioia 53-65)

Swing

The 1920s ushered in jazz as one of the most pivotal musical styles among the African American communities, the 1930s saw the emergence of swing as the dominant form of American popular music. Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Bennie Moten and Fletcher Henderson were in full “swing” by the mid-30s, and had contributed to a subgenre of jazz

that was undeniably danceable while retaining the complexity and artistic integrity present in the earliest forms of jazz. With widespread use of the radio in the 30s, jazz was now more accessible than ever. Jazz now began to cross racial and cultural lines in a way previously limited almost exclusively to cities like New Orleans, Chicago, New York, and Kansas City. A massive new market, both black and white, now hungered for what was the defining musical style of the 30s. Benny Goodman and Fletcher Henderson, among others, would proliferate the popularity of swing music while maintaining the complexity that was synonymous with jazz.

Technical skill was a universal characteristic among the big names of the era. Swing music is characterized by syncopation, soloing and improvisation. (Schuller 3-21) Improvising has become synonymous with jazz. Swing music catapulted jazz into the popular mainstream and resulted in widespread American audiences cramming into packed theaters, clubs and dancefloors itching for more.

Bebop

Bebop emerged in the 1940s as the first modern jazz style. Two key features of jazz are the instrumental complexity and improvisation, and Bebop is no different. Major players of the bebop era are Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, and Thelonious Monk, among others. Bebop is characterized by its speed and complexity. In many ways, bebop is as much a social revolution as it was a stylistic shift in mainstream jazz culture. Scott DeVeaux argues that bebop operates not within the jazz framework but outside of it. “Thus, bebop is often construed as a protest against commercialism: through the uncompromising complexity of their art, bebop musicians are said to have asserted their creative independence from the marketplace.” (DeVeaux 4) Indeed, bebop musicians carved out their own lane music and history.

Ted Gioia argues that the shift within the jazz genre to bebop was natural, a mere “...extension of jazz’s inherent tendency to mutate, to change, to grow.” (Gioia 186) Bebop marked a shift in focus from the big-band sounds of the prewar jazz scene, instead favoring a small-combo format in some ways reminiscent of the five-to-seven piece bands of the 1920s. Rhythm sections were now more prominent, allowing guitars, pianos, string basses and drums ample time to shine. Saxophones, trumpets and trombones took the spotlight as frontline instruments. Syncopations were now far less prominent, as musicians favored long phrases that might stay on the beat for measures at a time. “The 2/4 rhythmic feeling of New Orleans and Chicago was not completely replaced by the streamlined 4/4 sound favored by the Kansas City bands.” (Gioia 187) Bebop was in full force, and it had changed the sound of jazz forever.

Closing Thoughts

Many students that I teach feel as though they have no history or culture. Growing up “under the El” in Kensington, their lives are rife with struggle, violence and drug-abuse, either personally or in their family. In many ways, these students feel disenfranchised in their communities, politically and intellectually. I hope to use this unit as a way to impress upon them the understanding that people of color, historically, have always had a voice. By examining the development of musical genre across the history of jazz from the early roots to bebop, I hope to empower my students to realize that not only can they create music of their own to reaffirm their voice, but historically, people from their own countries of origin have always expressed themselves powerfully through music.

It is important for my students to understand the nuanced background of jazz. Studying the context and conditions in which the music developed and flourished is essential not only to understanding the significance of jazz, but also the musicology of it. My students will be required to define what music means to them at the beginning of this unit; by the end, I hope that their definition has changed significantly in the face of the knowledge they acquire about the history and evolution of jazz.

Key Vocabulary Terms

- **Improvisation**
- **Rhythm**
- **Timbre**
- **Harmony**
- **Form**
- **Syncopation**
- **Chorus**
- **Melody**

Objectives

This unit is intended for students in a 10th Grade American History course, but is also applicable to African American History and Social Science courses at the 11th and 12th grade levels, respectively. The students meet once a day for 50 minutes per class period, 5 times per week.

The objectives for this unit include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Establish a timeline of Jazz music beginning with the foundations of jazz, up through the 1940s and Bebop era.
- Examine the historical development of musical genres such as Ragtime, Jazz, Swing and Bebop
- Make connections between the development of the music and collective cultural attitudes and movements of various eras in history

- Understand the significance of shifts in genre as it pertains to historical, cultural and technological developments through the early-to-mid 20th century

Strategies

This unit will require students to develop and make use of critical listening, reading and thinking abilities as we examine a wide range of music, lyrics, primary sources and more in an effort to gain understanding of the rich cultural history and musical evolution of jazz. Students will be asked to note connections as well as make their own inferences throughout the unit.

Students will engage in a myriad of activities including, but not limited to:

Jigsaws

Students learn cooperatively by splitting into pairs or groups for reading assignments. They can be assigned into groups by reading levels, proximity, etc. Each student or group is responsible for either a complete text, or a portion of an article that they will then explain after rotating to a new group or the entire class.

Graphic Organizers

For this unit, I will be utilizing a Cornell Note taker graphic organizer for most of the readings in class. A Venn diagram will be provided for students when musical and historical comparisons are necessary.

Videos/Songs

There are definite differences between audio and visual learners. Listening to the music we are discussing is an essential element of this unit. For visuals, photos and video excerpts from the Ken Burns documentary, *Jazz* will be shown.

Parking Lot

Sticky notes will be provided for students individually or in groups, depending on the activity. They can use them to write down any questions they may have and they can place their question on the chart paper “parking lot” on the wall. This prevents constant interruptions to answer individual questions that could potentially be cleared up before the end of the lesson.

Activities

Each student will select one of the following projects for a culminating assessment:

- Daily reflections on the content covered in class
- A short research paper or presentation on an era or subgenre of jazz
- A biography assignment comparing and contrasting an influential musician and their contributions to the genre
- A culminating reflection in which students explain their initial definition/understanding of music & genre and how it has changed within the context of the evolution of jazz as a musical genre

Lesson Plans

Lesson One: African Roots

Objectives: Students will be able to investigate, explore, examine and understand how the history of African music can be traced back to its beginnings in traditional African music. Students will discover and identify different aspects of traditional African music. The main purpose of this lesson is to establish the Afrocentric musical principles and foundation upon which the later lesson will build on.

Materials and resources:

Anything that can be used as a drum or percussion instrument. (Buckets, trashcans, empty bins, tissue boxes, etc.)

Music:

- Baba Jinde (Flirtation Dance)
- Master Drummers of Dagbon
- Yoruba Drums from Benin, West Africa

Books:

- The Village That Vanished
- To Be a Drum

World Maps: One large world map at the front of the room can be used for whole-group instruction or reference. Individual world maps can be printed and distributed to students in groups or individually.

Step One: Explain that the purpose of this unit is to help students understand the history of African Americans and their musical identity. The first lesson will take place over 2-3 class periods and will provide students the necessary background knowledge of African musical traditions. Begin a generative class discussion by asking students to identify their favorite songs, artists, musical genres, etc. Ask students what they like about their

selected musical choices, and if they listen to this music with friends or family. Explain that the traditional music of Africa is ancient and diverse, with many regions in Africa possessing entirely unique traditions. Using the map(s), point out to students where they live now, and where Africa is. Transition into the next portion of the lesson by pointing out that African American music has had an immense impact on all American music, including the music that students listed during the class discussion.

Step Two: Play Baba Jinde (Flirtation Dance) by Babatunde Olatunji. Ask students to write down anything they notice or feel about the music. Explain to students that this is one example of traditional music of the Yoruba people in Nigeria. Allow students to take one makeshift percussion instrument apiece. Play Yoruba Drums from Benin, West Africa in the background while explaining the origins of West African music. Discuss with students that artifacts dating back to 1100 and 1200 A.D. depict the use of drums and other instruments still used today by the Yoruba people. The heterophonic singing style, in which singers overlaid versions of a melody to create a complex musical texture, was spread throughout Africa via migration. (Peretti 10) At this time, you may choose to replay Baba Jinde or another Yoruba song of your choice. Finish this portion of the lecture/discussion by explaining to students that African music, often categorized by its rhythm, improvisation and call and response techniques, was an immensely social, spiritual and familial aspect of African culture. Most African Americans have Yoruba ancestors, and many Yoruba people were taken captive as slaves from Africa. Students may drum along with Yoruba Drums while it plays in the background. Students may choose to imitate the rhythms they hear from Yoruba Drums, as well as create their own rhythms.

Step Three: Divide students into groups and assign them either To Be a Drum or The Village That Vanished. You may choose to assign specific roles to students in the groups (reader, recorder, summarizer, etc.) or allow them to take turns reading. Students should respond to a writing prompt or summarize the story in their own words. After students complete the assignment explain that most African villages did not escape slavery and many Africans were forcefully stolen from their homes and solve into forced servitude.

Closing Activity: Ask students to list 3-5 things that they learned about African music, Yoruba culture and their own definitions of music and its role in their lives.

Lesson Two: Slavery and The Early Roots of Jazz Music

Objectives: Students will be able to make connections between the previous lesson and the early roots of jazz music. Students will be able to identify and understand the essential elements of jazz such as rhythm, tradition, expression, harmony and more. Cultural and historical connections will be developed as students understand the evolution of jazz in New Orleans during the late-19th and early-20th centuries due to a melding of customs and cultures.

Materials and Resources:

Music:

- Teacher-selected songs from *Negro Work Songs and Calls*.
- Teacher-selected YouTube videos showcasing Jelly Roll Morton, Sydney Bechet and Scott Joplin

Video:

- Ken Burns' **Jazz** Episode One: Gumbo

Books:

- Jazz Cultures, Chapter One

Step One: Begin the lesson by summarizing the main points of the previous lesson. Refresh students' memory that traditional African music is an extremely personal form of expression. You may reference the lists from the previous day(s) of modern music that students enjoy. Explain once more that all American music is related to African American music in some way.

Step Two: Have students analyze the statement, "all American music is related to African American music in some way." Ask students to be as detailed as possible, making connections to previous discussions about west African music and Yoruba culture. Ask 2-3 students to share their responses with the class.

Step Three: Explain to students that slavery in America resulted in a synthesis of cultures that created the earliest forms of African American music. (At this point, it should be reiterated that this unit is intended to supplement a more traditional history unit on slavery and the slave trade. More emphasis on work songs and their importance in the study of American slavery in the south should be employed in a unit either before or after this unit.)

Step Four: Play examples of African American spirituals, work songs and ballads such as Unloading Rails, Quttin' Time Song 2, etc. Songs such as these are characterized by their call and response format. A leader sings a verse and others respond with a chorus. This musical format was instrumental in the foundation of gospel, blues and later, jazz. Students should note the rhythm, timbre, melody and chorus of each song. The call and response format demonstrates the way that music in African American culture creates a dialogue, still evident in African American traditions today. Provide students with lyrics to selected songs and have them follow along and/or participate in the call and response style of the music.

Step Five: Explain to students that slavery legally ended in 1865. Ask students to share their opinions about the ending of slavery. Inform students that like Yoruba music, most slaves were making music with their voices and different forms of handmade drums. Most slave music was improvised, a quality that is foundational to jazz music.

Step Six: Show portions of Ken Burns' **Jazz** – Episode One: Gumbo. During the 1800s, minstrel shows were performed by white people imitating black people, however, they later employed black people imitating the white people who had previously imitated black people. Play Episode One at 15:40 to show examples of minstrel shows. Ask students to share their feelings about minstrel shows and if they reflect prior information about west African or African American traditions.

Step Seven: Explain that African Americans gradually gained their freedom and moved to cities. Many began to use other instruments besides drums and vocals. **Jazz** Episode One at 50:40 demonstrates the beginning of African American music as an art form, identified by improvisation. Rewind to **Jazz** Episode One, 22:00 as examples of band formations and the importance of horns as instruments. Fast forward to **Jazz** Episode One at 48:00 to show students Jelly Roll Morton, the man who claims to have invented jazz music. Explain that with the incorporation of a new instrument, the piano, and Jelly Roll Morton's written music, Ragtime was created and began to gain appeal. Ragtime would later be combined with the blues to form jazz. You may choose to play examples of Ragtime by showing YouTube videos of Jelly Roll Morton, Sydney Bechet or Scott Joplin.

Step Eight: Distribute copies of *Jazz Cultures* by David Ake. Chapter One highlights the beginning of early New Orleans Jazz by showing the cultural and socioeconomic clash between black Creoles and enslaved & non-enslaved blacks. Many black Creoles were freed from bondage before the official abolition of slavery in the south, and partially as a result, disassociated themselves with enslaved and non-Creole blacks. Louisiana legislation in 1894 designated anyone of African descent as a negro, slashing the classist and racist barriers that black Creoles had upheld for so long. Highlight portions of the chapter that discuss Sydney Bechet & Jelly Roll Morton, making connections to the role they played in the early roots of jazz music. Explain despite their Creole background, both had a desire to be strong improvisers, like the non-Creole blacks, a quality that would later become inherent to jazz music.

Closure: Ask students to summarize in 5-7 sentences what they learned about music & slavery and the early foundations of jazz music. Guide students by asking them to note any similarities or differences between early jazz, work songs and Yoruba music.

Lesson Three: The Jazz Age & Swing

Objectives: Students will be able to understand the cultural and artistic implications of African Americans migrating to major cities in the U.S. Students will be able to make connections between the previous lesson and the development of Swing music as it evolved from the synthesis of Ragtime and the blues. Students will also be able to learn about and identify important artists and musicians of the 1920s such as Claude McKay, Langston Hughes, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong and Benny Goodman.

Materials and Resources:

Music:

- The Golden Age of Swing: Twenty Greatest Hits – Volume 1
 - Duke Ellington – Perdido
 - Benny Goodman – Don't Be That Way

Video:

- Betty Boop - I'll be glad when you're dead
- Hellzapoppin' excerpt (clip linked in lesson plan)

Books:

- The Complete Poems of Paul Laurence Dunbar – A Negro Love Song

World Map or Map of the United States

Step One: For a hook activity, ask students to write down if they have ever moved from one area to another, where their relatives are from, or if they plan to one-day move to another city/state/country and why. Explain that many free African Americans moved to major cities to find new opportunities and a hope for equality. Making a connection to lesson two, inform students that as African Americans gained their freedom, they moved to large cities such as New Orleans, New York and Chicago. Point these cities out on the map, or have students locate them in small groups.

Step Two: Highlight the importance of New Orleans in the creation of jazz as a whole, relating the information to the previous lesson's discussion about the combination of Creole and non-Creole black culture. Explain that the 1920s & 30s brought about a period of immense African American musical, poetic and artistic expression known as the Harlem Renaissance. This is also the period in U.S. history when the focus shifted from "big band" ensembles to soloists such as Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington.

Step Three: Explain that lyrics in African American music came mostly from poets. One very important poet of the early 1900s was Paul Laurence Dunbar. Divide the class into small groups and hand out copies of Paul Laurence Dunbar's poem "A Negro Love Song." Read the poem once with the entire class, then allow students to read the poems together in their groups. Model the call and response technique present in the poem and throughout many forms of African American music by having one part of the group read a line while the other responds with "Jump back, honey, jump back."

Step Four: Explain that this type of poetry marked the beginning of a period of immense creativity in African American history known as the Harlem Renaissance. Poetry often discussed in history and English classes by greats such as Langston Hughes and Claude McKay was created alongside popular Swing music during the 1920s. Discuss with students that Black music became popular music during this period as it was used in movies and cartoons. Show the clip from the Betty Boop cartoon, "I'll be glad when you're dead, you rascal, you." (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KU86IIIf8Q4>) This clip is especially insightful because it shows Louis Armstrong playing with the band at the beginning. Be sure to make students aware that despite the cultural breakthrough of Armstrong's image and music featured in the cartoon, it is seldom shown today due to its negative stereotype of African Americans.

Step Five: Explain that Swing music was primarily for dancing. Swing helped to usher in a period of social liberalism during an otherwise segregated and racist period in American history. For possibly the first time, it did not matter what color your skin was, just how well you could play or dance. Show students this video clip (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EsxtGBMQGq4>) from the 1941 film 'Hellzapoppin'. The clip shows how big bands looked and sounded during the period as well as how Swing dancing was performed. Ask students to note the similarities and differences between this type of music and the music of the previous lesson.

Step Six: Play "Perdido" by Duke Ellington and "Don't be that way" by Benny Goodman. Discuss the call and response format of the songs, in which there is a back-and-forth between the lead and background instruments, most commonly the horns. Ask students to identify similarities and differences between this music and the other styles of music discussed so far.

Closing Activity: Teachers may choose to create a list of formative assessment questions based on the content covered to measure for understanding. Students may also write a paragraph summary on the topics covered throughout the lesson. Summaries should include information on how musicians moved to major cities following slavery, how poetry and music were essential elements of the Harlem Renaissance and how Black culture was beginning to enjoy influence in mainstream American media.

Independent Practice: Ask students to put themselves in the shoes of either a poet, artist or musician during the Harlem Renaissance. Write a journal entry depicting a day or short time in the life of that individual. They may choose to write creatively from their own perspective or choose one of the artists discussed in the lesson. Background research is encouraged if students choose a historical figure.

Lesson Four: Wartime and Bebop's Elite

Objectives: Students will be able to understand the evolution of Bebop, the first style of modern jazz. Students will understand the influence and legacy of Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie. Students will note the similarities and differences between Swing and Bebop. The final project for the unit will begin at the end of this lesson.

Materials and Resources:

Music:

- Charlie Parker – Anthropology
- Glenn Miller – I've Got Rhythm

Video:

- Dizzy Gillespie – And Then She Stopped

Articles:

- Patriotism Crosses the Color Line: African Americans in World War II.
- Miller, Doris ["Dorie"] (1919-1943)

Images:

- Romare Bearden – The Dove

Step One: Ask students to define the word expert. Students may work independently or in pairs. Have 2-3 students provide their definition orally or by writing it on the board. Once it has been defined, inform students that the final portion of the unit will be on a very expert, elite and exclusive form of jazz known as Bebop. Explain that Bebop is seen as the first form of modern jazz, and in fact, is often used as another name for modern jazz altogether. Bebop was created by side men in swing bands, usually after performances or rehearsals.

Step Two: Revisit swing music by playing Perdido, Don't Be That Way, or another selection from The Golden Age of Swing. Following that, play Koko by Charlie Parker. After playing each song once, hand out a Venn diagram to each student. Play each song

once more, asking student to list similarities and differences in timbre, tempo, rhythm, harmony, and melody. Students should be able to identify, using prior knowledge, that Swing music is more “danceable,” while Bebop has an entirely different personality. If students are struggling to articulate the nuances of Bebop at this point, that is acceptable.

Step Three: Explain that Bebop developed in the 1940s, around the same time as World War II. Swing music marked the crossover of Black music into mainstream popular culture. Bebop developed at a time when African American men were volunteering to serve in the war in record numbers; over 2.5 million black men registered for the draft, with 1 million serving in all branches of the armed forces during the conflict. Hand out copies of the reading “Patriotism Crosses the Color Line: African Americans in World War II” and read it aloud. Following the reading, ask students to discuss why African American men might have volunteered in droves to serve a country that had mistreated them for centuries.

Step Four: Following the the reading assignment, you may also include this article to show an exceptional story of heroism during the attack on Pearl Harbor. Hand out copies of Doris Miller’s short biography and discuss it with students. Explain to students that following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Americans were fighting a war on multiple continents, the scale of which had never been seen before.

Step Five: Explain that while World War II was being fought across the globe, thanks in no small part to millions of Black soldiers, back at home there was a musical revolution taking place in the form of Bebop. Similarly, to the intellectual explosion of the Harlem Renaissance, Bebop was an art form dedicated to the Black experience, created for listeners, and required substantial thinking and reflection. If Swing music was made for the mainstream audience, Bebop was the musician’s music, it demanded careful thought and technical skill on behalf of both the performers and the listeners. Swing music was considered entertainment, while Bebop was considered art.

Step Six: Ask students to record information in their Cornell notes. A typical Bebop combination is made up of 3-7 players. Usually, there were 2 horns, and the rhythm section. It was common to see a combination of trumpet, saxophone, piano, drums and bass. Although Bebop can be played at any tempo, faster tempos were more common. Swing melodies were more “digestible,” made for dancing, while Bebop melodies were more complicated and difficult to play. Major facets of Bebop included improvisation and the emergence of the “jam session” in which artists would improvise together and try to outplay each other.

Step Seven: Explain to students that three famous Bebop artists will be introduced. Begin with Charlie Parker. Charlie Parker was the leader of the Bebop era and one of the most profound innovators of the genre. He played the alto saxophone with virtuosity and immense technical skill. Play Charlie Parkers’ *Anthropology*, then Glen Miller’s *I’ve Got*

Rhythm. Have students fill in their Venn diagrams with similarities and differences. Finish this portion of the lesson by showing the video of *And Then She Stopped* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sT6nup0jVG0>). Make notice of Dizzy Gillespie's technique and huge cheeks. Also point out the solos and how each musician demonstrates technique and extreme control over their instrument.

Step Eight: For the final portion of the lesson, hand out copies of *The Dove* by Romare Bearden. Explain that *The Dove* is a collage, created using pieces of magazine and newspaper to make new images with a profound message. Ask students to describe the scene. The scene depicted is Harlem, New York. Ask students to write down any details they notice about the image, such as the architecture, colors, images used, etc. Discuss with students how the scene is fragmented, much like life. Romare Bearden grew in during the Harlem Renaissance and was an avid fan of jazz music. The way that the art was examined in class mirrors the way that Bebop took an existing art form and reworked it to create a new, unique and beautiful interpretation. Just as artists still utilize the collage technique today, jazz musicians are still creating Bebop.

Closing Activity: Students will be asked to summarize key points covered across the lesson. Ask students to describe how *The Dove* mirrors the changes from Swing to Bebop as an artistic medium.

Independent Practice: This assignment is more of a reflection than practice. Have students write 1-2 paragraphs about how their concept of music has changed throughout the unit. Have them recall their initial assertions of music and how it relates to their life, comparing it with how music has been an integral part of African American history.

Final Project: Research, Reports and Presentation of Famous Jazz Musicians

Objective: Students will research a selected genre or artist who played a significant role in the history of jazz and present their findings to the class. The purpose of this project is for students to do independent research and build necessary 21st-century skills while also educating their peers through their presentation about the impact of their selected musician.

Materials and Resources: Books, magazines, Internet, articles, compact discs, MP3s, video.

Procedures: Students will select and research a genre of jazz music and an important artist. They may select an artist that has been discussed in the unit, or, with teacher guidance, select another artist and genre. The students will be required to research the history of the genre and any significant developments or innovations that the artist contributed to that genre. Students will write a 2-page paper on their topic and develop a 5-7 slide presentation to disseminate their findings with the class. Students must also

include a slide on how their newfound understanding of African American music has developed throughout history. Students will have 2-3 full class periods to conduct their research and 2-3 class periods to draft the paper and the presentation. There will be one class period devoted to student conferences and peer-review. Students will have the option to use the school library to find books to supplement their research. The internet will be used in class on a daily basis. Students may use Chromebooks to conduct research or the library computers. Students are also able to use research outside of the classroom, such as library books, magazines, articles and encyclopedias. The use of outside resources may warrant teacher-review.

Research Paper: Students will be required to write a 2-page research paper on the life, career and influence of their selected artist and genre. The paper must be supported with research from the aforementioned sources. The paper should include information on the time period of the genre, historical context or influence on the genre, and popular songs from the artist and/or genre.

Presentations: 5-7 slides should be created as a consolidated version of the information that students discovered through their research. The purpose of the presentation is for students to summarize their research into a digestible manner, and educate their classmates about their topic.

Assessment: The paper and presentation will have separate, teacher-created rubrics. Students will conduct a self-assessment of their research presentation. The rest of the class will conduct a fishbowl-style assessment of the student's presentation including style, content, stage presence and behavior.

Bibliography

Reading List

Ake, David A. *Jazz Cultures*. Berkeley U Press, 2002. Print.
Chapter 1 of this book is an excellent resource for a classroom discussion on the early history of jazz in New Orleans, as well as challenging notions of what "blackness" in America is.

Coleman, Evelyn and Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson. *To Be a Drum*. Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman & Company, 1998. Print.

This book details the story of the middle passage, slavery, the civil-rights struggle and much more. It establishes the basis and themes for the rest of the unit.

Griffloni, Ann and Kadir Nelson. *The Village that Vanished*. New York, NY: Puffin, 2004. Print.

The story of a West African village that avoided capture and enslavement. This helps students to understand the experience of West Africans regarding slavery and shows that despite this tale, most did not escape slavery.

Dunbar, Paul L. *A Negro Love Song – The Complete Poems of Paul Laurence Dunbar*. New York, NY: Dodd, Mead and Company, 2006.

The complete poems of Paul Laurence Dunbar. A great Segway into the Harlem Renaissance and the importance of poetry, lyrics and music in African American culture.

Taylor, Clarence. *Patriotism Crosses the Color Line: African Americans in World War II*. The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. History Now: The Journal of the Gilder Lehrman Institute, n.d. Web. 15 June 2017.

<<https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/world-war-ii/essays/patriotism-crosses-color-line-african-americans-world-war-ii>>.

A great article summarizing the key points of African American military service during World War II.

Whitaker, Matthew C. *Miller, Doris[“Dorie”] (1919-1943)* Blackpast.org. Arizona State University, n.d. Web. 15 June 2017. <http://www.blackpast.org/aah/miller-doris-dorie-1919-1943>

A concise account of Doris “Dorie” Miller, an African American Messman who displayed heroism during the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Teacher Resources

DeVeaux, Scott. *The Birth of Bebop: A Social and Musical History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997. Print.

A great resource for Bebop and all of its intricacies. Extremely in-depth for those teachers who would like to cover more of the historical and sociological implications of the Bebop genre.

Floyd, Samuel A. *The Power of black music: interpreting its history from Africa to the United States*. N.p.: Oxford U Press, 1997. Print.

Somewhat self-explanatory, this book establishes the major ideologies and principles for the unit.

Gioia, Ted. *The History of Jazz*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. Print.

The most comprehensive and reader-friendly general history of jazz music. Gioia is an expert on the subject.

Gioia, Ted. *How to Listen to Jazz*. New York: Basic Books, 2016. Print.

For teachers who would like to learn how to break down and evaluate the complexities of the genre. Extremely helpful in developing an ear for jazz music.

Peretti, Burton W. *Lift Every Voice: The History of African American Music*. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009. Print.

Like the Floyd book, another text that lays the groundwork for the rest of the unit.

Ward, Geoffrey C. Et al. *Jazz: An Illustrated History*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000. Print.

A fantastic companion piece to Ken Burns' *Jazz* documentary. Both the book and the documentary can be used liberally throughout the unit.

Schuller, Gunther. *The Swing Era: The Development of Jazz, 1930-1945*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989. Print.

An excellent book on the Swing Era and how Swing music became a mainstream hit, helping to cross racial boundaries in the process.

Zinn, Howard. *A People's History of the United States, 1492-present*. New York, NY: HaperCollins, 2008. Print.

A detailed history told from the perspective of the individual, rather than the whole. Howard Zinn discusses the Civil War from the perspective of slaves, and does not shy away from telling stories that are usually swept under the rug. An excellent book to consult for any history class.

Discography

Drums of Passion. Babatunde Olatunji. Columbia Records, 1960.

The Golden Age of Swing: Twenty Greatest Hits. Various Artists. Delta Music Group, 2009.

Negro Work Songs and Calls. Eds. B.A. Botkin and Alan Lomax-1943 Library of Congress Archive of Folk Culture. Rounder Records, 1999

Yoruba Drums from Benin, West Africa. Various Artists. Smithsonian Folkways, 1996.

Master Drummers of Dagbon. Alhaji Ibrahim Abdulai. Rounder Records, 1984.

Masters of Jazz, Vol. 2 – Bebop's Greatest Hits. Various Artists. Rhino Records, 1996.

Film

Hellzapoppin'. Dir. H.C. Potter. Universal Pictures, 1941. Film.

Jazz. Dir. Ken Burns. PBS, 2001. Film.

Content Standards

Arts and Humanities:

9.2 Historical and Cultural Contexts

9.2.3.A Explain the historical, cultural, and social context of an individual work in the arts.

9.2.3.B Relate works in the arts chronologically to historical events.

9.2.3.C Relate works in the arts to varying styles and genre and to the periods in which they were created.

9.2.3.D Analyze a work of art from its historical and cultural perspective.

9.2.3.E Analyze how historical events and culture impact forms, techniques and purposes of works in the arts.

9.2.3.F Know and apply appropriate vocabulary used between social studies and the arts and humanities.

9.2.3.G Relate works in the arts to geographic regions.

9.2.3.J Identify, explain and analyze historical and cultural differences as they relate to works in the arts.

9.2.3.K Identify, explain and analyze traditions as they relate to works in the arts.

Literacy:

1.3 Reading, Analyzing and Interpreting Literature

1.3.3.A Read and understand works of literature.

1.4 Types of Writing

1.4.3.B Write informational pieces using illustrations when relevant.

1.6 Speaking and Listening

1.6.3.D Contribute to discussions.

1.6.3.E Participate in small and large group discussions and presentations.

1.6.3.F Use media for learning purposes.

1.8 Research

1.8.3.B Locate information using appropriate sources and strategies.

1.8.4. C Organize and present the main ideas from research.