



Teaching Path

TATIP

January 11, 2016

School/Grade(s): 5th Grade (In school)

Art Forms: Music and Visual Arts

Theme: The Blues and Art

Teaching Artists: Jiji Kikhia and Carolyn Clark

Length: 12-Week Residency

Inquiry Questions

1. How can students use creative expression to overcome “blue” feelings?
2. How can students use poetry, song, and visual arts to enhance their understanding of American history and English language arts?
3. How did visual artists and poets use the blues?
4. What does music look like? What does visual art sound like?
5. Why did the Blues begin – why do human beings need creative outlets? Why does it “feel good”?
6. How are human emotions (moods) and music/art connected?

Residency Goals

Students will know about the evolution of the blues from the work songs and spirituals of enslaved African peoples, the post-slavery migration of African Americans from the South to the North, and the great flourishing of African American visual arts, music, and poetry during the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s. Many Blues artists were not trained musicians; they expressed what they knew and improvised sounds, sharing folktales and stories.

Students will understand that people in less-than-ideal situations have used creative expression in visual arts, music, and poetry to improve their outlook and show their strength. More specifically, the difficult situations African Americans experienced are what gave rise to the Blues. As a result, the mood of the music/art is dependent on the human circumstances and emotions. The Blues eventually led to Jazz and to Rock n Roll. Students will understand that pop music today is a descendent of The Blues.

Culminating Products and Events

1. We will have a performance and exhibition of the songs and art students have created, as well as the songs and art they have studied during the residency.
2. We will create an anthology of student lyrics and art, as well as a recording of students’ original songs.

Creative Skills

Students will be able to identify various blues musicians and visual artists. Students will be understand the musical form of the blues and be able to write their own lyrics and

improvise their own tunes. They will identify and practice 12-bar blues. They will identify visual artists and explore the Harlem Renaissance style of collage and bright colored art. Students will be able to connect how the blues music and visual arts are different ways of expressing the same human experience during the early 20th century in the USA. They will compare and contrast music and visual art from The Blues.

Multiple Intelligences

1. Verbal linguistic
2. Musical
3. Intrapersonal
4. Bodily kinesthetic
5. Spatial Visual

Outcomes and indicators

- Success of creating a song
- Self-awareness – aware of and express certain emotions
- Measure comfort with improvisation
- Understand the 12 bar blues
- Simple verbal/written expression/stories – identify emotions/thought/event and express it in a simple fashion (i.e. the blues style) – not sophisticated
- Assessment through the morning ritual (free drawing/painting). The same directions every day on the board:
 - Paint your mood/feeling - what is your mood?
 - Paint an event/what event affected you recently?
 - Paint your perfect world
 - Paint to the music

Visual Art Skills

- Identify and create collage
- Color arrangement/color relationships
- Composition
- Abstract
- Figurative
- Representational vs. non representational

Creative Elements/Terms

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Rhythm (poetry and song lyrics) | 8. Optimism | 16. Composition |
| 2. Melody | 9. Sadness | 17. Collage |
| 3. Harmony | 10. Hardship | 18. Abstract |
| 4. Emotions | 11. Struggle | 19. Figures |
| 5. Feelings | 12. Poetry | 20. Mood |
| 6. Sarcasm | 13. Verse | 21. Colors |
| 7. Humor | 14. Chorus (refrain) | 22. Emotions |
| | 15. Musical form | 23. Sound |

24. Representational vs. non representational

Artists/Authors/Works of Art

Music

1. Leadbelly (Huddie Ledbetter)
2. Sam Kinison
3. Duke Ellington
4. Bessie Smith
5. W.C Handy

Visual

1. Romare Bearden ("My Hands Sing the Blues" Book)
2. Alma Thomas
3. Jack Whitten
4. Jean Michel Basquiate
5. Jeff Donaldson

Poetry

1. Langston Hughes

Curriculum integration

- Reading Gr.5, Standard 6: Describe how a narrator's or speaker's point of view influences how events are described.
 - a. Recognize and describe how an author's background and culture affect his or her perspective.
- Reading Gr. 5, Standard 7: Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).
- Responding to Literature Gr. 5, Standard 11: Recognize, interpret, and make connections in drama to other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, personal events, and situations.
- Reading Informational Text Gr. 5, Standard 4: Determine the meaning of general academic and domain- specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a *grade 5 topic or subject area*.
- Writing Gr. 5, Standard 5: With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
- Writing Gr. 5, Standard 6: With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others;
- Writing Gr. 5, Standard 8: Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources;
- Writing Gr. 5, Standard 11: Create and present an original poem, narrative, play, art work, or literary critique in response to a particular author or theme studied in class.



- a. Recognize and illustrate social, historical, and cultural features in the presentation of literary texts.
- Speaking and Listening Gr. 5, Standard 1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 5 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
 - b. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.
 - c. Pose and respond to specific questions by making comments that contribute to the discussion and elaborate on the remarks of others.
 - e. Seek to understand and communicate with individuals from different perspectives and cultural backgrounds.
- Speaking and Listening Gr. 5, Standard 5: Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, sound) and visual displays in presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.

Rituals and Routines

1. Opening Ritual: Free drawing with blues music
 - a. **Objective:**
 - i. Pull inspiration from themselves/poems/songs/paintings
 - ii. Pull inspiration from previous activities – helps with memory and creating connections
 - iii. Allows them to create an art portfolio
 - iv. Students learn that all feelings are allowed and that it's okay to express pain and struggle
 - v. Students can re-use the drawings later for mixed media or collage for example
 1. Learning about the life cycle of a piece of art (can live many lives and be used in endless ways)
 - vi. The visual art allows students to create a portfolio of emotions, events, memories...etc. The portfolio draws a tangible link between human sentiment/experience and art.
 - b. **Materials:**
 - i. Small and Medium size paper + drawing materials
 - ii. Computer paper size and oil pastels, pencils, colored pencils, crayons...etc
 - c. **Steps:**
 - i. Materials are spread out on tables: Colored pencil, pencil, marker, oil pastels and paper
 - ii. Grab a piece of paper from piles
 - iii. Students will have the following optional prompts/questions on the board to inspire the drawings:
 1. Draw what you feel today (what is your mood?)
 2. Draw the music you hear
 3. Draw an event that has affected you recently
 4. Draw your dream world
 5. Draw your favorite Blues song you learned in class

- iv. Students are allowed to make as many drawings or sketches as they want
- v. Leave time for reflection and quick shares (volunteer)
- 2. Closing Ritual: Call and Response
 - a. Simple blues song
 - b. Eventually students will lead the call and response!
 - c. "I do good work. I do good play. I'm the best me I can be today (2x). OH YEAH!!!!!"

Critical Thinking Skills

- 1. Creating original poetry, lyrics, and tunes
- 2. Creating original visual art
- 3. Problem solving with collage
- 4. Building bridges and comparisons between the different forms of art: What does music look like? What does visual art sound like?
- 5. Problem solving when identifying musical patterns, but also allow enough creative expression to bend the rules (especially with improvisation – that's The Blues!).

Timeline

- 1. **Establishing Norms and Class Culture**
 - a. Classroom Rules:
 - i. Never touch or meddle with another person's artwork without permission
 - ii. Never touch the teacher's supplies/instruments without permission
 - iii. Take care of our art supplies (use them properly)
 - iv. Clean up!
 - v. Use kind words
 - vi. Share
 - vii. There are no mistakes only Happy Accidents
 - viii. HAVE FUN!
- 2. **Ice breakers and Low risk activity/assessment**
 - i. Activity 1: Music: "Hello my name is" song secretly assesses whether you can carry a tune or not
 - ii. Activity 2: Visual Art: Collage with the same 3 pre-cut shapes
 - 1. See all the different designs and compositions are made with the same 3 shapes
- 3. **Activity 3: Intro to the Blues:**
 - a. Rich history, music, field hollers, tradition, pain and hope
 - b. Your pain is where your strength comes from
 - c. Singing about your struggle makes you feel better
 - d. It is a way of expression!
 - e. At one point, everyone in blues community was friends – they fed off on another!
- 4. Closing Ritual (call and response)

DAY 1: Introducing the Blues

1. Opening Ritual
2. **Intro of the Blues:**
***The Blues* by Langston Hughes**
 - Read the poem
 - Discuss the blues
 - Rich history, music, field hollers, tradition, pain and hope
 - Your pain is where your strength from
 - Singing about your struggle makes you feel better
 - It is a way of expression!
 - Everyone was friends – they inspired one another – friendly competition!
3. Activity 1: What makes you have the blues? (E.g. moving cities, saying goodbye to friends, running out of toothpaste)
 - Bring in some humor
 - Write it down, or draw it
 - Individual shares
4. **Intro to the Form (Musical Formula): AAB/AAAB**
 - Say the same thing twice maybe 3 times and then a contrasting line at the end
 - Repetition, usually your feelings about yourself/your life/about some time, releasing some sort of negative feelings, irony,
5. Activity 2: use the children's blues shares to improvisations
 - Teaching artist will do improvisations – call and response with group
 - Open to fun and humor
6. Closing Ritual

DAY 2: Learn a Blues Songs

1. Opening ritual
2. **Review of Intro:**
 - a. Review of Day 1 history, form (musical formula), general characteristics
3. Activity #1: Learn two Blues songs
 - a. "Takes a worried man to sing a worried song"
 - b. "Good morning"
 - c. Say the same thing twice maybe 3 times and then a contrasting line at the end
6. Activity #2: Introduce **Alma Thomas**
 - a. Alma Thomas Samples
 - b. Painting Acyclic Abstract Activity
 - i. Vocabulary: Abstract, Repetition, Lines
 - c. Color Knowledge (rainbow)
7. Closing Ritual

DAY 3: Write a Blues Song (Lesson Plan Presentation)

1. Opening ritual
 - a. "Stormy Tuesday" background music



- b. Draw inspiration from printed paintings on the wall and from daily questions
- 2. INTRO: Review of Day 2 songs: sing again
 - a. “Worried Man Blues”
 - b. “Good Morning Blues”
- 3. MAIN: Write own lyrics/verse using “Flip, Flop, and Fly” as template (25-30 min)
 - a. INTRO
 - i. AAB:
 - 1. 3 lines: 2 are the same, and 1 is different.
 - ii. You are going to write another verse
 - iii. Introduce the writing process – open, flexible, improvisational, simple
 - iv. E.g. Carolyn and Jiji will make funny simple examples (“my cat threw up on the bedroom floor – I don’t want to clean up after that cat anymore”)
 - b. STEPS: Instructions:
 - i. Students can pull from own experience or your own current mood
 - ii. Students write improvised blues song
 - iii. Go around the classroom and do our shares
 - iv. Everyone shares as Carolyn plays the keyboard improv instrumentals!
 - c. END: Discussion and reflection
 - i. Students reflect on experience (share)
 - ii. Sample Questions: Do you think you are more truthful the more spontaneous you are?
 - iii. Does singing about your day or your mood make you feel better?
 - iv. Does it feel like venting?
- 4. Closing Ritual
 - a. Call and Response
 - “I do good work.
 - I do good play.
 - I’m the best me I can be today. (2x)
 - OH YEAH!!!!!!”

DAY 4: The Cotton Club Mini-Play Part 1

- 1. Opening Ritual
- 2. Review of Day 3: how to make a blues song
 - a. Blue songs = mournful scale – blues notes
- 8. Activity 1: Introduce Jean Michel Basquiat
 - b. Oil Pastels and collage self portrait
- 3. Activity 2: Split into groups: Writers (poets), visual artists (painters), and musicians
 - a. Objective: to understand how the Blues Harlem Music scene was a small world where the artists collaborated and were inspired by one another and even competitive (rivals).



- b. Through the activity the students understand one aspect of the artistic process, i.e. the artists constant exposure and interaction and sharing with the community. The artists pulled inspiration from one another.
 - c. Steps:
 - d. Split into groups and start working on the play: re-enact a scene at The Cotton Club
 - e. Each group has 2-3 minutes mini-play
 - i. Can create any dialogue, can base it on any real life artist or make up an artist (will have to research the artist!)
 - f. All groups will perform for the first time together in order the next day (creates surprise, anticipation, and fun!)
4. Closing Ritual

Day 5: The Cotton Club Mini-Play Part 2

- 1. Opening Ritual
- 2. Activity 1:
 - a. Introduce Jeff Donaldson
 - b. Learn Mosaic Painting
- 3. Activity 2:
 - a. Activity 1: Continue Cotton Club Play preparation
 - b. Presentation: The Cotton Club Play (10 Minutes)
 - i. End: We all dance to “Take the A Tain” by Duke Ellington
 - ii. Moral of the story/activity is that music has the power to unite
- 4. Closing Ritual

Day 6: Romare Bearden and “My Hands Sing the Blues”

- 1. Opening Ritual
- 9. Activity: Introduce Romare Bearden
 - a. **Objective:**
 - i. There are all kinds of artistic expression, maybe you will feel connected to one more than another, it is okay to feel comfortable with just one or many art-forms!
 - ii. Notice similarities and differences between visual art and music
 - iii. Learn how one can express him/herself visually through the blues
 - b. **Steps:**
 - i. Read very short story *My Hands Sing the Blues* by Jeanne Walker Harvey
 - iii. Discuss
 - 1. How can you see music and hear colors?
 - 2. How would you draw music?
 - iv. Observation and discussion activity with Bearden's art samples
 - b. **Practice:**
 - i. Collage visual arts exercise
- 2. Closing Ritual

Day 7: Jack Whitten and Intro to Culminating Project



1. Opening Ritual
2. Activity 1: Introduce Jack Whitten
 - a. Abstract Painting Activity
3. Activity 2: Start Culminating Project
 - a. Give the option of solo or working in a group
 - b. The students pick from 3 already prepared instrumentals
 - c. Children record voice over instrumentals
 - d. Children can create all sounds from scratch
 - e. Can create any art piece inspired by the blues
 - f. Can exhibit portfolio of Opening Ritual drawings, can create a new piece of art of any of the medias discussed (oil pastels, acrylic, collage...etc), can create a solo piece or group piece
4. Quick Intro to Garageband
 - a. Improvisation, getting to know the program
 - b. Teach how to record voice over instrumentals
5. Closing Ritual

Day 8: Intro to Garageband

1. Opening Ritual
2. Activity 1: Intro to Garageband
 - a. Improvisation, getting to know the program
 - b. Teach how to record voice over instrumentals
 - c. Start recordings or individuals groups can choose to perform live
3. Closing Ritual

Day 8: Work on blue songs and final art piece

1. Opening Ritual
2. Optional: Garage Band Training
3. Closing Ritual

Day 9: Work on blue songs and final art piece

1. Opening Ritual
2. Optional: Garage Band Training
3. Closing Ritual

Day 10: Work on blue songs and final art piece

1. Opening Ritual
2. Optional: Garage Band Training
3. Closing Ritual

Day 11: Dress rehearsal (Free Choice)

1. Opening Ritual
2. Closing Ritual

DAY 12: Culminating Event – MUSIC AND ART SHOWCASE

- Can invite parents and/or invite another class 😊

- Very short opening ritual – 1 minute drawing!
- Visual Art: can exhibit portfolio of Opening Ritual drawings, can create a new piece of art of any of the medias discussed (oil pastels, acrylic, collage...etc), can create a solo piece or group piece
 - It will be hung on the walls in the classroom or new designated space to create a temporary gallery
- Music: each individual/group will perform or play their songs (either recordings or live performance). All performances will be performed in front of the displayed final art.
 - Performance can be improvisational
- Optional:
 - The visual art and music can be related/connected and/or performed together (e.g. a play or stage art for the music)
- Discussion and Reflection
 - Express themselves individually but then in reflection see the common threads between themselves and between the different art forms
- Closing Ritual