



## “What is Latin Jazz?”

The video *What is Latin Jazz?* is five minutes and five seconds in length, and provides a mini history lesson of where and when Latin Jazz originated. Mr. Washburne presents a “simple” definition and a more “complicated” definition of the origins of Latin Jazz.

The simple definition originates from the teaming of Dizzy Gillespie and Chano Pozo in the 1940s when the two musicians combined the styles of American jazz, with Latin American and Caribbean musical traditions. The term “Latin Jazz” ultimately emerged as a result of the equal treatment that these two styles received when combined, and became a popular genre of jazz.

The “complicated” version traces the history of this style back to the early days of New Orleans, where various cultures merged in this large North American port. Influences of Caribbean, French, and North American cultures blended into a satisfying mixture that is evident in New Orleans speech, food, architecture, and music. Mr. Washburne says that early American jazz had actually merged with Caribbean and Latin American music long before Dizzy Gillespie and Chano Pozo “reintroduced” it to audiences in the 1940s. He settles the simple and the complicated by saying that Latin Jazz originated in New Orleans during colonial times and was “reinvigorated” in the 1940s .

The lesson plans contain genre-related study questions, discussion questions, vocabulary terms, activity/assessment suggestions, suggested teaching methodologies, and referrals to:

English Language Arts - Anchor Standards of Common Core State Standards  
Literacy - Common Core State Standards  
Music Standards - National Association for Music Education (NAfME)  
Social Studies Standards - National Council Social Studies Teachers

## Chris Washburne Mini Biography

Chris Washburne is a New York-based trombonist who also plays various other instruments including tuba and percussion. He is adept at playing numerous genres of music and travels extensively around the globe performing with a wide range of musical groups. Mr. Washburne received his Bachelors of Music in classical trombone performance from the University of Wisconsin and a Masters degree from the New England Conservatory in Third Stream Studies. In 1993, he received a Mellon Fellowship to travel and study musical traditions of Cuba. Washburne is currently Associate Professor of Ethnomusicology at Columbia University. He has written and edited numerous books and has lectured extensively on topics ranging from trombone techniques, to Latin Jazz.



## Lesson Plan

### *"What is Latin Jazz?"*

- I. Objectives
    - A. Students will be able to define and identify specific music, literary, and social studies terms. (See key terms/Vocabulary)
    - B. Students will learn the origins of Latin Jazz.
    - C. Students will appreciate the diverse culture of New Orleans.
    - D. Students will distinguish between origins and renaming.
    - E. Students will choose a writing assignment: write a mini biography of one of the musicians mentioned in the video; or research the origins of other music styles.
  - II. Essential Questions
    - A. Is recorded history always accurate? Why is it important to research historical events using a wide variety of resources?
    - B. How can music change cultures? How can cultures change music?
  - III. Materials needed
    - A. Internet access: Jazz Academy Video *"What is Latin Jazz?"*.  
<http://academy.jalc.org/Jazz/Chris%20Washburne%20Answers%20%5C%22What%20Is%20Latin%20Jazz%3F%5C%22/>Or  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wCGxg6OdOU8>
  - B. Supplementary items: Key Terms; Mini biography; Study Questions (Included)
- IV. Common Core Standards : Identified at the end of the lesson plan.
- V. Teaching strategies
  - A. Direct instruction
  - B. Multimedia engagement
  - C. Discussion
  - D. Guided questioning
  - E. Group work
- VI. Teaching and learning procedures
  - A. Have Latin Jazz music playing in the background as students enter classroom, or before the video is played. Begin the lesson with a discussion of history. Ask students to list or discuss ways in which they have learned history. Guide the discussion on whether or not they believe everything they read in history books or online. Tell them they are going to learn some history about Latin Jazz, and that sometimes versions of history are incomplete.
  - B. Introduce the video, providing students with the mini biography of Chris Washburne. Also review the Key terms and vocabulary (provided). Ask students to jot down things that interest them about the video.
  - C. Play the video in its entirety. When finished, discuss students' reactions.
  - D. In class discussion, or groups, or individual work, assign the study questions.
  - E. Allow the students to choose a writing assignment to culminate the activity. Suggestions for these assignments are found under Questions for further study.



## Key Terms/Vocabulary

### “What is Latin Jazz?”

#### General Literacy

- **Anecdote:** *Noun.* A short telling of a story or an account of an event or incident, often entertaining, personal, or biographical.
- **Crucial:** *Adjective.* Extremely important.
- **Figurative language:** *Noun.* Language that has more than one level of meaning; not to be taken literally.
- **Genre:** *Noun.* A specific type of music, writing, or other artistic expression.
- **Incorporate:** *Verb.* To include.
- **Legacy:** *Noun.* Something of importance that is passed on to future generations.
- **Origins:** *Noun.* Beginnings
- **Reinvigorate:** *Verb.* To give new energy; revive.

#### Music

- **BeBop:** *Noun.* Genre of jazz that emerged in the early 1940s, breaking away from traditional swing music with new developments in aspects such as rhythm, tempo, and harmony.
- **Big Band:** *Noun.* In this video, Big Band refers to a large musical group that usually played swing - something easy to dance to.
- **Blues:** *Noun.* A genre of music originating within the African American community in the Southern United States in the 19th C., simultaneously expressing the joys and sorrows of life.
- **Rhythm:** *Noun.* Repeated pattern of sound or movement.
- **Style:** *Noun.* A specific or particular way something is performed or done.
- **Swing:** *Noun.* A distinct type of jazz rhythm; a type of performance or communication where everyone is in synch.

#### Social Studies

- **Apollo Theater:** *Noun:* Famous historical building venue in Harlem which served to promote and entertain the African American community and provided a stage for great Black performers, starting in the 1930s.
- **Biography:** *Noun.* From the Greek words “Bio” meaning life; and “Graphia” meaning write. A biography is a written account of a person’s life, written by someone other than that person.
- **Caribbean:** *Noun:* Islands in the Caribbean Sea with a rich culture of music brought into the region by African slaves.
- **Carnegie Hall:** *Noun.* Located in Midtown Manhattan, a prestigious concert hall built in the 1890s. Famed entertainers from around the world and from all genres of music have performed at Carnegie Hall.



### Study questions

#### *“What is Latin Jazz?”*

1. According to the video, what is the “simple” definition of Latin Jazz?
2. In the 1940s, how did the music **genres** of Jazz and and the Caribbean “meet?” To whom does Mr. Washburne attribute this meeting? How did these men **reinvigorate** Latin Jazz?
3. What is “CuBop” and who first used that term?
4. According to the video, the “complicated” definition of Latin Jazz began in which American City? When?
5. Mr. Washburne notes at least three ways that the culture of New Orleans is different from the rest of the United States. What are these differences? Why did New Orleans develop so differently than other U.S. cities?
6. Explain how American jazz and Caribbean music first combined.

### Questions for further study

1. Choose a musician mentioned in the video and write a mini **biography**. Be sure to include how they were influenced to play and/or compose their music and what contributions they made: Mario Bauzá, Dizzy Gillespie, Chano Pozo.
2. The “simple” definition of Latin Jazz, and the “complicated” definition of Latin Jazz are in fact quite different. What does this reveal about the study of history? Why is it important to use various sources when researching historical events or people?
3. Research one of the music venues mentioned in the video (Apollo Theater, Boston Symphony, or Carnegie Hall). Write a report focusing on its historical significance.
4. Research the musical culture of the **Caribbean** and discuss with the class some of its contributions to American culture.



## Lessons are aligned with the following standards

English Language Arts - Anchor Standards of Common Core State Standards

Literacy - Common Core State Standards

Music Standards - NAFMe

Social Studies Standards - National Council Social Studies Teachers

*CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1*: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners.

*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.

*CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.5* Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

*CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.6* Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

*CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.10* Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

*CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.

*History disciplinary standards K-12*: Develop historical understanding through the avenues of social, political, economic, and cultural history.

*History disciplinary standards K-12*: Practice skills of historical analysis and interpretation, such as compare and contrast, differentiate between historical facts and interpretations, consider multiple perspectives, analyze cause and effect relationships, compare competing historical narratives, recognize the tentative nature of historical interpretations.

*Music Grade 9-12 Music Standard 8* Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.

*Music Grade 9-12 Music Standard 9* Understanding music in relation to history and culture