



Music In Our Schools Month®, General Music: 5th Grade, 2019–2020

“Great Big House in New Orleans” Children’s Song

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Overview:

Throughout these lesson plan launching points, students will explore the cultural history of folk songs and use their musical skills to create and add to an existing folk song. Students will work to put together a full performance of the folk song using what they create.

“Great Big House in New Orleans” (Children’s Song)

<https://folkways.si.edu/pete-seeger-mika-seeger-and-rev-larry-eisenberg/great-big-house-in-new-orleans/childrens/music/track/smithsonian>

Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jgTNK0J2XHU>

Prerequisite Skills

For students to be successful in this unit they will need knowledge of and experiences with the following:

- Maintain a steady beat
- Identify musical form
- Demonstrate proper singing and instrument technique
- Read basic musical notation

Instructional Goals/Objectives

Launching Point 1: Students will look at how a song is influenced by its culture and will use their connections to the song to select ways to add to and perform the song.

Launching Point 2: Students discuss the history of folk music and the song “Great Big House in New Orleans” and then discuss their various interpretations of the song and its folk dance.

Launching Point 3: Students will create their own B section to the song based on their interpretations and then create their own variation on the folk dance to be used for performance.

National Core Arts Standards (2014)

CREATING

Anchor Standard:

MU:Cr1.1.5b. Generate musical ideas (such as rhythms, melodies, and accompaniment patterns) within specific related tonalities, meters, and simple chord changes.

Essential Question:

How do musicians generate musical ideas? How can these ideas be used to enhance an existing song?

Enduring Understanding:

The creative ideas, concepts, and feelings that influence musicians’ work emerge from a variety of sources.

RESPONDING

Anchor Standard: MU:Re7.2.5a, Demonstrate and explain, citing evidence, how responses to music are informed by the structure, the use of the elements of music, and context (such as social, cultural, and historical).

Essential Question:

How does understanding the structure and context of music inform a response?

Enduring Understanding:

Response to music is informed by analyzing context (social, cultural, and historical).

CONNECTING

Anchor Standard: MU:Cn10.0.5a. Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.

Essential Question:

How do musicians make meaningful connections to creating and responding, performing, and responding?

Enduring Understanding:

Musicians connect their personal interests, experiences, ideas, and knowledge to creating, performing, and responding.

Materials and Library of Congress Resource Links for the Unit

<https://folkways.si.edu/pete-seeger-mika-seeger-and-rev-larry-eisenberg/great-big-house-in-new-orleans/childrens/music/track/smithsonian>

Teacher Talk—To the Teacher

Discuss with students the history of the song and where it came from. The teacher may choose 1 or more other variations of the song to present to the class. Have students compare their different interpretations of the song and discuss how it is different from our culture today and how there are also similarities.

Launching Point 1: Students will look at how a song is influenced by its culture and will use their connections to the song to select ways to add to and perform the song.

Launching Point 2: Students discuss the history of folk music and the song “Great Big House in New Orleans” and then discuss their various interpretations of the song.

Launching Point 3: Students will create their own B section to the song based on their interpretations and then create a folk dance to be used for performance.

Launching Point 1

Objective: Students will look at how a song is influenced by its culture and will use their connections to the song to select ways to add to and perform the song.

Essential Questions:

How do musicians make meaningful connections to creating, performing, and responding?

Specific Performance Standards

MU:Pr4.2.5c. Explain how context (such as social, cultural, and historical) informs performances.

Procedure:

1. Play the song “Great Big House in New Orleans,” and have students discuss the meaning of the lyrics.
2. Discuss with students the history of the song and the culture of the time period in which it was written. As students discuss the history, they can incorporate their own drawings to show the house and illustrate the story.
3. Have students compare it to our culture today and then have students brainstorm their own version of the lyrics using things that represent our current time.
4. In groups, have students create a new verse to the song and then perform to the class.

Assessment:

Students will be informally assessed through discussion as they make connections to the song and the culture.

Launching Point 2

Objective:

Students discuss the history of folk music and the song “Great Big House in New Orleans,” and then discuss their various interpretations of the song and its folk dance.

Essential Question:

How does understanding the structure and context of music inform a response?

Specific Performance Standard:

MU:Pr4.2.5a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance.

Procedure:

1. Play “Great Big House in New Orleans,” and teach the lyrics.
2. Discuss the form of the song with students and how the structure can help form a response. How can the form of the song connect with the composer’s intent of the song?
3. Discuss how the lyrics can be interpreted and how the folk dance can fit the meaning of the song.

Assessment:

Students will be assessed on their use of musical terminology and application of those terms when analyzing the structure of the song.

Launching Point 3

Objective:

Students will create their own B section to the song based on their interpretations and then create a folk song to accompany the full song.

Essential Questions:

How do musicians generate musical ideas? How can these ideas be used to enhance an existing song?

Enduring Understanding:

The creative ideas, concepts, and feelings that influence musicians' work emerge from a variety of sources.

Specific Music Performance Standards:

MU:Pr4.2.5a. Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in music selected for performance.

MU:Pr4.2.5c. Explain how context (such as social, cultural, and historical) informs performances.

MU:Pr6.1.5a. Perform music, alone or with others, with expression, technical accuracy, and appropriate interpretation.

Procedure:

1. Following Launching Points 1 and 2, have students discuss how they can create a B section to the song. Should the B section be a different melody, include improvisation, or movement?
2. Students will work together in groups to decide how they would like to represent the B section.
3. Still in groups, have the students create a folk song based on the form of the song.
4. As each group present their ideas and additions to the song, discuss how new interpretations can come from a variety of sources (resources, cultures, experiences).

Assessment:

Students would be assessed on their final performance which is a culmination of their improvisation, expressive elements, and movement.

Extension:

Ultimately, at this point in the lesson, students will have learned of the cultural aspects of the song, made connections to present day, and worked to create variations of the song in which they would be able to do a complete performance.

“Great Big House” Lyrics

1. Great big house in New Orleans,

Forty stories high,

Every room that I been in

Filled with pumpkin pie.

2. Went down to the old mill stream,

To fetch a pail of water;

Put one arm around my wife,

The other 'round my daughter.

3. Fare thee well, my darling girl,

Fare thee well, my daughter,

Fare thee well, my darling girl,

With the golden slippers on her.

Source: <http://kodaly.hnu.edu/song.cfm?id=738>