



## FIGHT THE POWER: MUSIC AS SOCIAL FORCE

### GET READY TO ROCK! A PRE-VISIT GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

#### TARGET GRADE LEVEL:

7-12 grades

#### CLASS DESCRIPTION:

In many times and places, people have used music as a powerful tool for social change. The story of rock and roll overlaps with some of the most turbulent times in U.S. history. In the 1960s alone, American society was being torn apart by debates over the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights movement, and the Women's Liberation movement. Since that time and well into the present, musicians have entered such debates by spreading messages of revolution, protest, and empowerment through musical styles as diverse as folk, rock, and hip-hop. This class features songs from the 1960s to the present that have challenged audiences to consider the alternatives and make changes in our society. Students explore recordings and videos of legendary artists to examine expressions of social commentary contained in lyrics, performance styles, and historical images.

#### OBJECTIVES:

As a result of this class, students will be able to

1. Give examples of ways musicians have used popular music to pose questions about society and suggest avenues for change.
2. Interpret the lyrics of songs by applying knowledge of poetry and historical references to the Vietnam War, the 1960s counterculture, the Civil Rights movement, and the Women's Liberation movement.
3. Explain how music and musicians both influence and are influenced by society and culture.

#### RELATED OHIO ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS:

##### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Acquisition of Vocabulary	7	Benchmark A, C
	8-10	Benchmark A, C
	11-12	Benchmark C
Reading Process: Concepts of Print, Comprehension Strategies and Self-Monitoring Strategies	7	Benchmark A, B, C
	8-10	Benchmark A, B
	11-12	Benchmark A, B
Reading Applications: Informational, Technical and Persuasive Text	7	Benchmark D, E
	8-10	Benchmark D
	11-12	Benchmark D, E
Reading Applications: Literary Text	7	Benchmark E, G

8-10	Benchmark D, F, G	
11-12	Benchmark D, E	
Communication: Oral and Visual	7	Benchmark A
	8-10	Benchmark A
	11-12	Benchmark A

##### SOCIAL STUDIES

History	7-8	Benchmark A
	9-10	Benchmark F
	11-12	Benchmark B
People in Societies	7-8	Benchmark C
	9-10	Benchmark A, B
	11-12	Benchmark A, B, C,
Government	7-8	Benchmark A

Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities	7-8	Benchmark A
	9-10	Benchmark A
	11-12	Benchmark A

##### FINE ARTS—MUSIC

Historical, Cultural and Social Contexts	7-8	Benchmark A, B, C
	9-12	Benchmark B,
Analyzing and Responding	7-8	Benchmark A
	9-12	Benchmark A, D
Valuing Music/Aesthetic Reflection	7-8	Benchmark A, B
	9-12	Benchmark B, C
Connections, Relationships, Applications	7-8	Benchmark B, C
	9-12	Benchmark A



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### SUGGESTED PREPARATION ACTIVITY:

#### GRAPHIC HISTORY

The purpose of this activity is for students to work in groups to analyze an issue and make decisions, organizing historical information in text and graphic format. Divide your classroom into pairs or groups. Arbitrarily assign one year from the 1960s and/or 1970s to each group. Ask students to imagine that they work for *TIME* or *LIFE* magazine and must design the end-of-year cover. They must choose and research an issue relevant at the time to create a cover that visually represents a particular theme, such as conserving during the energy crisis, reactions to the Vietnam War, petitioning for a lower voting age, etc. What event did they choose to represent that year and why? How did they decide on the representative image (individual, group, location, object, etc.)? What key words or phrases did they include and why? Students should present their research and covers to the class, explaining their design decisions. See <http://www.time.com/time/coversearch> or <http://www.life.com/search/?type=galleries&date=1913-2010&q0=covers&itemsperpage=30> for examples.

### EXAMPLES TO BE DISCUSSED IN CLASS:

**NOTE:** Preview all materials for appropriateness for your students.

Green Day. "Know Your Enemy." *21<sup>st</sup> Century Breakdown*, 2009.

Dylan, Bob. "The Times They Are A Changin'." *Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*. Columbia, 1963.

Franklin, Aretha. "A Change is Gonna Come." *I Never Loved a Man the Way I Loved You*, 1967.

Beatles. "All You Need is Love." *Magical Mystery Tour*, 1967.

Black Sabbath. "War Pigs." *Paranoid*, 1970.

Gaye, Marvin. "What's Going On." *What's Going On*, 1971.

Black Eyed Peas. "Where is the Love?" *Elephunk*, 2003.

Bob Marley and the Wailers. "Get Up, Stand Up." *Burnin'*, 1973.

Free, streaming videos of most performances can be found on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) or [blip.fm](http://blip.fm)

Free, streaming audio tracks of most songs can be found on [www.grooveshark.com](http://www.grooveshark.com) or [blip.fm](http://blip.fm)



## FIGHT THE POWER: MUSIC AS SOCIAL FORCE

### GLOSSARY

**Civil rights:** The rights of a citizen; in the U.S., particularly the rights guaranteed under the U. S. Constitution: right to vote, right to equal treatment under the law, etc.

**Counterculture:** 1. A culture with values and morals that run counter to those of established society. 2. A rebellious youth movement in the 1960s that pursued an alternative lifestyle and protested injustice in American society

**Empowerment:** Expanding the political, social or economic strength of individuals or groups

**Military draft:** Selection of individuals for compulsory service in the military

**Musical style:** The distinctive characteristics of the sound and organization of musical performances and compositions; used to categorize music reflecting similar approaches to melody, harmony, form, and/or performance techniques

**Protest:** Objecting or disapproving, usually through an organized, public event

**Psychedelic:** A term coined by psychiatrist Humphrey Osmond in 1956 from the Greek root words *psyche* (soul) and *delein* (manifest). Referring to a state of mind found in dreams or a trance

**Racial segregation:** Separation of racial groups by law and custom, which restricted the access of black Americans to jobs, schools, neighborhoods, stores, etc. and privileged white Americans; outlawed by the U.S. Congress in 1964

**Revolution:** A struggle to overthrow a ruling government which often involves violence and tactics for accomplishing sudden changes

**Society:** A term describing collective human networks, or organized groups of people who often share common interests; what people do together in communities, institutions, and other groups

**Symbolism:** A poetic device where words are used to stand for or represent something else by conveying both literal and figurative meanings

**Vietnam War:** Military conflict that occurred in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia from 1959 until 1975. The war was fought between the communist North Vietnam, supported by its communist allies, and the government of South Vietnam, supported by the United States and other nations. The United States sent combat troops to Vietnam in 1965.

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