



“TELL ME SOMETHING GOOD”: POPULAR MUSIC AND THE LANGUAGE ARTS

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

TARGET GRADE LEVEL:

Grades 1-4

CLASS DESCRIPTION:

Many songs tell stories, describing characters and their adventures in particular places at particular times. This class looks at some of the great stories of rock and roll and examines how lyrics can establish a setting, introduce characters, and develop a plot. Through exciting recorded performances by Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Inductees like Aretha Franklin, the Beatles, and Chuck Berry, students learn how narrative can be developed. They will act out undersea adventures on a “Yellow Submarine” and imagine what it would be like to be “Johnny B. Goode” by drawing what they hear and read in the lyrics, all while learning to summarize and retell the stories told through rock and roll.

OBJECTIVES:

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

1. Respond to stories told in songs by summarizing main ideas, noting significant details, and supporting interpretations with references to text (both lyrics and instrumental aspects).
2. Identify narrative elements (characters, setting, point of view) and retell the plot sequence.
3. Explain how an author’s choice of words expresses ideas, appeals to the senses, and suggests mood.

RELATED OHIO ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS:

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Acquisition of Vocabulary Standard

- 1-3 Benchmark A
- 4 Benchmark A, B

Reading Process: Concepts of Print, Comprehension Strategies and Self-Monitoring Strategies

- 1-3 Benchmark B, E
- 4 Benchmark B, C

Reading Applications: Literary Text

- 1-3 Benchmark A, B
- 4 Benchmark B, C, E, F, G

Communication: Oral and Visual

- 1-2 Benchmark A, B, C
- 3-4 Benchmark A, B

FINE ARTS – DRAMA/THEATRE

Creative Expression and Communication

- 1-4 Benchmark A

FINE ARTS—MUSIC

Historical, Cultural and Social Contexts

- 1-4 Benchmark A, B

Valuing Music/Aesthetic Reflection

- 1-4 Benchmark A, C

Connections, Relationships and Applications

- 1-4 Benchmark A

FINE ARTS—VISUAL ART

Creative Expression and Communication

- 1-4 Benchmark B



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SUGGESTED PREPARATION ACTIVITY:

WHO, WHERE, WHAT?

Before your visit, review the elements of narrative with your students. You may wish to consult the included glossary. Choose a story or stories to read to your class or have students read independently. Ask students to identify the characters, setting, and plot of each story. Now have students retell the story out loud in their own words. You may choose to have students work in pairs or groups. Students may also present their version of the story to the whole class.

EXAMPLES TO BE DISCUSSED IN CLASS:

NOTE: Preview all materials for appropriateness for your students.

Franklin, Aretha. “Respect.” *I Never Loved a Man the Way I Loved You*, 1967.

The Beatles. “Yellow Submarine.” *Magical Mystery Tour*, 1967.

Berry, Chuck. “Johnny B. Goode.” *Chuck Berry Is on Top*, 1958.

The Police. “Message in a Bottle.” *Regatta de Blanc*, 1979.

Free, streaming videos of most performances can be found on www.youtube.com or blip.fm

Free, streaming audio tracks of most songs can be found on www.grooveshark.com or blip.fm

GLOSSARY

Characters: The narrative element that describes who is involved in a story’s events: the people or animals a story is about

Chorus: The line or lines that are repeated in music often with the same musical accompaniment

Imagination: The ability of forming mental images when they are not perceived through sight, hearing or other senses.

Lyrics: The words of a song, often arranged in sections of verses and choruses

Narrative: An account of events, experiences, or the like, true or fictitious; a story

Narrator: The storyteller who describes the events of the plot, the story’s setting, and tells readers what characters know and do in a story: someone who tells a story

Plot: The narrative element that describes the events that happen in a story and often includes a problem and a solution

Point of view: The narrative element that describes who is telling the story and whether the storyteller talks about events that happen to him/her or someone else

Setting: The narrative element that describes where and when a story takes place: the time and place of a story

Verse: A section of lyrics that tells part of the song’s story and is similar to a verse in a poem

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