



ASSEMBLY DATE: _____
ASSEMBLY TIME: _____
FOR STUDENTS IN: _____



Young Audiences Assembly Teacher Guide

Curtis Blues: The Roots of Rock and Rap - Rhythm and Lyrics in Acoustic Delta Blues

Students will learn how modern popular music styles evolved from acoustic blues. Using fascinating instruments from the history of American popular music, Curtis Blues brings the history of American music alive for students.

Our Crenshaw students were so attentive during your show for one reason only, you. Your message "spoke" to this age group. Your music was the best - amazing, actually! The people skills you used to keep the kids engaged were really professional from a teaching point-of-view. I have never seen our gym so full of children listening to every word and following directions so well.

*Barbara Conley
Teacher, grade 4*



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***Please pass along the attached teacher program guide to all participating classrooms**

Inside this guide:

- Program description
- Artist Bio
- Standards
- Vocabulary
- Resources
- Pre & Post Performance Activities
- Discussion questions
- Background info
- Blues songwriting lesson plan

Setup Requirements

Please confirm setup/technical requirements.

Artist arrival time

At least 30 minutes before performance time.

Suggested Introductions

"Ladies and Gentleman, Boys and Girls please give a warm welcome to Mr. Ryan Diehl and the Global Beat Connection!"

Inclement Weather

DON'T WORRY! Artists will follow school closings and delays and will work with you to reschedule the performance if necessary.

Young Audiences Contact Number

410-837-7577

Call 410-837-7577 and follow the prompts to be connected with a staff member on call for After Hours or Emergency.



Maryland

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Program Description

This program helps students understand how American blues music evolved into present day rock, country, hip hop, and rap music. During this interactive program, the original American music of the 1920s and 30s comes alive for students as they pretend to chop wood to the work song beat of the blues. Curtis performs as a one-man band playing drums, harmonica, vintage resonator guitars, the one-string diddley bow and the homemade box guitar to

bring the blues era alive for students. A grade level appropriate discussion about song lyrics helps students understand how word choices can make their own writing more interesting and fun to read.

Artist Bio

Voted Solo Blues Artist of the Year in 2010 by the MD, DC, VA Blues Society, Curtis Blues is a talented musician and educator who demonstrates the roots of modern rock and hip-hop music by playing instruments from the history of American roots music. Curtis has been playing Delta blues since he was fourteen years old, when he was exposed to some of the last living Delta blues masters at folk festivals. Curtis has recorded two critically acclaimed CDs and performs at blues festivals and for thousands of school children each year in an effort to pass this precious music down to the next generation.

Through my association with Young Audiences and the Teaching Artist Institute I have broadened my perspective on how teaching the history of acoustic blues can make the curriculum's history, music, and language arts details come alive. With arts-integrated teaching, students experience that learning can be engaging and fun.

-Curtis Blues

I thought the Cultural Arts show was wonderful! It aligned with our US history standards, bringing a feeling of life in the south alive and vibrant. It was obvious that Curtis Blues connected to these students with his music, knowledge and soul!

*Joanne Spino
Grafton Middle School*



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Common Core Standard:

CCSS. ELA-Literacy.RL.5.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.

Maryland State Curriculum Standards For Fine Arts:

2.0 historical, cultural, and social context:
students will demonstrate an understanding of music as an essential aspect of history and human experience.

INDICATOR 1. Develop the ability to recognize music as a form of individual and cultural expression through experiencing music as both personal and societal expression

OBJECTIVES

Listen to music examples from various world cultures and describe how rhythm is used

1. Develop the ability to recognize music as a form of individual and cultural expression through experiencing music as both personal and societal expression.





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Vocabulary

Blues music: A style of popular music invented by African Americans in the 1920's. It has different variations depending on when and where it was played. It uses slurred notes and rhythms to express feelings, both happy and sad.

Delta blues: Blues music from the region of the Mississippi River Delta, particularly in the state of Mississippi, during the 1920s and 1940s before it went to Chicago in the 1940s.

Chicago blues: A style of electric band music created in the 1940s when Delta musicians migrated to Chicago and electrified the Delta blues.

Acoustic music: Music made without electric instruments (such as electric guitars and keyboards) using the natural sound of the instruments. It was most popular in rural areas before electricity was common. An example might be a person playing an acoustic guitar with another person on harmonica.

Rhythm: The pattern of musical movement through time. A specific kind of such a pattern, formed by a series of notes differing in duration and stress.

Work song rhythms: Rhythms developed as a way to coordinate farm work like chopping down a tree or two people sawing wood. It developed into songs that helped people pace their work through the day. These rhythms became a basis for the first blues music.

Plantation music: Music played by slaves on their one day off a week. They often used "Patting Juba" rhythms played on their bodies and the banjo as well as singing. This music came before the blues and influenced its early development.

Syncopation: A rhythmic style often used by hip-hop artists which adds an extra beat or drops a beat in a sequence to make the rhythm more interesting.

Rock 'n Roll: The style of music that came after Chicago blues which sped up the rhythms of the blues and added aspects of country music. "The blues had a baby and they called it rock 'n 'roll."

One man band: When one person creates the sound of many instruments or plays a few different instruments at the same time.

Resources

Online

www.musicforlittlepeople.com/Audio_Recordings/Downloads/Big_Blues

Books

Delta Blues by Ted Gioia



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Pre-Performance Activities:

The teacher can play some acoustic blues songs in class and compare and contrast them to the music the students listen to today. Artists like Robert Johnson can be found on YouTube.

After playing both pieces of music ask the children:

- Can you name one thing that sounded the same between these two pieces of music?
- Can you name one thing that sounded different between these two pieces of music?
- What do you already know about blues music?
- After listening blues music, can you tell me one new thing you learned about it?
- What do you want to know more about blues music?

Post-Performance Activities- with assessment:

Ask students to describe what changed in music as it went from acoustic blues music into either: country, pop, rock, hip hop or rap music.

Students should describe how the rhythm and tempo changed as well as the instruments used as demonstrated in the assembly program.

Classroom Discussion Questions:

Can music express a culture or time period? If so, how?

Can you name one new vocabulary word you learned today and define it?

Why do you think today's music is so connected to music of the past?

Can you give an example of a modern lyric that uses figurative language?

Background/ Additional Information:

Delta blues is a musical form invented by African American in the South, particularly Mississippi, during the 1920's -1940's. During the great migration of African Americans from the agricultural South to the industrial jobs of the North, they brought their Delta style music with them. This music was electrified with the introduction of the electric guitar and access to microphones in the 1940's which served as the basis for rock n' roll and rap music.



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CURTIS BLUES YOUNG AUDIENCES OF MARYLAND	
Lesson Title: You Can Write a Blues Song!	
Artist's Name: Curtis Blues	
Teacher's Name:	
School:	
Grade K	Date
<p>Fine Arts Standard Standard 2.0 Historical, Cultural, and Social Context Students will demonstrate an understanding of music as an essential aspect of history and human experience. Indicator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2. Become acquainted with the roles of music in the lives of people <p>Objectives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Perform songs and dances from a variety of historical periods and world cultures, including some connected to general classroom studies 	
<p>Other Content Area Standard /MD State Curriculum Grade K Standard 1.0 General Reading Processes Topic E. General Reading Comprehension Indicator</p> <p>4. Demonstrate understanding of text (after reading) Objectives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recall and discuss information from text 2. Respond to questions (who, what, and where) and verify answers using illustrations/text 3. Respond to text by drawing, speaking, dramatizing, or writing <p>Indicator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6. Determine important ideas and messages in literary texts <p>Objectives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Retell the story by sequencing the main events 2. Identify a personal connection to the text <p>Common Core RL1 CCR Anchor Standard Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text. RL1 With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text. (SC, K)</p> <p>With prompting and support, demonstrate understanding after reading, viewing, or listening to a text:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. retell and discuss the text 2. engage in conversation to understand the text 3. determine the main idea of a text 	

continued on next page



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Lesson Objective To use writing a blues song about the characters in a book the students read to help them master the language arts and music standards, focusing on determining which details are the most important ones in the story.

Introduction/ Motivation (10 minutes)

Teacher: “Smart Time”. We are going to get Smart through Art. I will play a blues song! YouTube is a great source for acoustic blues songs from artists like Robert Johnson. Teacher plays song and asks students to listen.

Modeling (10 min)

Teacher shows students how blues songwriters choose their words and images in their songs by drawing a simple picture of what happened in the song showing, how we can draw a conclusion which details are the most important in the song.
Teacher presents details in relation to class reading and creates a sample web.

Guided Practice (10 min)

Students make their own picture of something that happened in their story that shows a conclusion they can draw about why it is important. (Teacher works with students individually to assess progress.) The goal of this interaction is to see if the students make a distinction between details that interest them personally, and ones that are important to the story and its characters.

Independent Practice (5 min)

Students draw a picture of something that happened in the story used.

Assessment/Closure (10)

Teacher creates a web on the board using the details from the student’s webs.
Teacher can help students put their pictures in a song using the following guide with help from the teacher on the board.
(A character from their reading) woke up this morning and saw, heard, felt _____.
They must have (felt, wanted, believed) _____.

Vocabulary

Blues music – music created by African Americans in the 1920’s to express feelings using a variety of instruments.
Resonator guitar – the loudest guitar invented in 1928 before the invention of the electric guitar, used by blues artists.
Ax Song rhythm – the steady beat used by workers in the South to coordinate their activity such as chopping down trees. It evolved into the beat of the blues and when sped up became Rock’ N Roll.

Materials - Single sheet of paper and a crayon for the students to draw a picture of what happened that they want to hear in a song.

Handouts N/A

Resources for the Teacher

www.curtisblues.com