DVOŘÁK IN THE NEW WORLD

CURRICULUM

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WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

This guide is designed to prepare, reinforce and extend learning concepts and ideas in the Class Notes video Antonín Dvořák in the New World. In addition to relating several basic facts about the composer, Antonín Dvořák in the New World explores the idea of inspiration and influence in the composition process. Content and activities address both historical facts and larger ideas of inspiration and influence. The information and standards-based activities in this guide are intended to engage students through active learning. We hope you will personalize, modify or adjust content to meet your unique needs.

PREPARING TO WATCH THE VIDEO

Just as literacy teachers use prereading strategies, music teachers or parents can use prelistening/prewatching strategies. This helps learners create a mental framework to organize new ideas, relate new content to prior knowledge and make connections. What you bring to a listening experience will affect what you hear and take away from that experience.

1. Listen to some music by Dvořák (“dih-VORE-zhock”).

   Start with the Larghetto from his Sonatina in G major, Op. 100 for Violin and Piano, which was also published separately as “Indian Lullaby” or “Indian Lament.” You will learn what inspired this particular piece of music while watching the video Antonín Dvořák in the New World.

2. Listen to some more music by Dvořák, including:
   - The third movement (Scherzo) from Symphony No. #7
   - Part of his Cello Concerto in B Minor, Op. 104
   - One of the lively and energetic Slavonic Dances
   - The String Quartet No. 12, also known as the American Quartet

Audio for all these pieces can be found on the Antonín Dvořák in the New World Lesson Plan Audio page.

While listening to Dvořák’s music, use a set of listening questions to keep students interested and engaged. These questions will structure and focus listening as well as reinforce basic knowledge of instruments and instrument families. Here is a sample set listening questions:

   - What instruments do you hear?
   - Is one instrument featured more than the others? Or, do you hear any instruments that play a solo?
   - Do you hear any melodies that remind you of a birdcall? One of the pieces above was inspired by a birdcall. Can you figure out which one?
   - Listen to a Slavonic Dance. What kind of dancing would go well with this music?
The American Quartet is used extensively in Antonín Dvořák in the New World. Composed during Dvořák’s summer-long stay in Spillville, Iowa, the third movement shows the clear influence of nature, since the melody imitates the sound of a bird: the scarlet tanager.

Dvořák listened to the scarlet tanager’s birdcall and wrote down the following notes:

You can hear the call of a real scarlet tanager on the Antonín Dvořák in the New World Lesson Plan Audio page.

After notating the birdcall, Dvořák then worked that melody into the third movement of his American String Quartet.

3. Learn about H. T. Burleigh. Here is a video that gives a brief overview of his life. Or look through the resources and information at The Harry T. Burleigh Society.

4. Listen to and learn about Native American music. This Classical MPR video features musician and educator Lyz Jaakola speaking about Anishinaabe traditions and music.

5. Talk about inspiration and influence. Explain that composers, like any artist, are influenced and inspired by many things when they create art. Use the worksheet on the following page to get students thinking about how they are inspired and influenced by the world around them.
WHAT INSPIRES YOU?

Where do you look to find creative ideas? Nature, family, friends, sports, feelings or something else? Circle one of the sources of inspiration you see on this sheet and explain how this influences you when you create or hear music. If your source of inspiration is something different, list that instead. Can you give an example of a time when you were inspired by something specific?

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Source
REINFORCE IDEAS AND CONCEPTS FROM THE VIDEO THROUGH ACTIVE LEARNING

1. Play Dvořák trivia. After watching Antonín Dvořák in the New World, ask learners true/false questions to secure knowledge of historical information and facts.

This activity could be done by putting questions into worksheet format or by choosing two contestants to face off, game-show-style. Here are some questions that would work well in either format:

› True or False: Antonín Dvořák’s father was a carpenter. (False. Bonus point for remembering that he was a butcher.)
› True or False: Antonín Dvořák was inspired and influenced by nature. (True.)
› True or False: Antonín Dvořák was inspired by rap music. (False. Bonus point for listing either African-American spirituals or Native American music as influences.)
› True or False: Antonín Dvořák was born in the country that is now the Czech Republic. (True.)
› True or False: Antonín Dvořák was one of 17 children. (False. Bonus point for remembering that he was one of 14 children.)
› True or False: Antonín Dvořák began his musical career by learning piano, organ and violin. (True.)
› True or False: Antonín Dvořák wrote nine symphonies. (True.)
› True or False: Antonín Dvořák thought a country should look to its own history and music as a source of inspiration. (True.)

Or try Antonín Dvořák Jeopardy! Here are some questions that would work well:

› Czech composer Antonín Dvořák came to this country for several years to learn and study. (What is the United States of America?)
› Antonín Dvořák wrote ten of these large-scale vocal works. (What are operas?)
› This singer and composer introduced Antonín Dvořák to African-American spirituals. (Who is H.T. Burleigh?)
› This Minnesotan landmark inspired Antonín Dvořák. (What is Minnehaha Falls?)
› In addition to Minnesota, Antonín Dvořák visited this midwestern state. (What is Iowa?)
› While at Minnehaha Falls, Antonín Dvořák chose to notate or write down a melody in this unusual place. (What is his shirt sleeve?)
› This scale uses five notes in an octave instead of seven. (What is a pentatonic scale?)

2. Sing some spirituals. A few to try: “Follow the Drinking Gourd,” “Keep Your Eyes on the Prize,” “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” and “Wade in the Water.”

3. Learn some Native American songs. Find resources here or here.

4. Create music using the pentatonic scale. Pentatonic scales are comprised of five notes. There are several different kinds of pentatonic scales. To create an easy pentatonic melody, use the pitches c, d, e, g and a. If you have Orff instruments available, remove extraneous bars so that the five pitches above are the only ones available to students. Ask them to improvise a melody. If you have access to a keyboard or piano, you can improvise a pentatonic melody by playing on just the black keys.
EXTEND LEARNING WITH PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Explore the idea of influence and inspiration through composition activities. Many composers are strongly influenced by other composers.

Create a short musical piece inspired by one of the following composers. With each composer’s name, you will find general characteristics of that composer’s style. Before composing in the style of a composer, listen to several of the composer’s works. Find examples of each composer’s music on the Antonín Dvořák in the New World Lesson Plan Audio page.

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<th>Composer</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
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| Claude Debussy           | - Influenced by visual art/impressionist painting  
                            - Blending of sounds through the use of pedal on piano  
                            - Frequent use of pentatonic and whole-tone scales  
                            - Use of parallel chords                                      |
| Philip Glass             | - Frequent use of ostinatos and repeated patterns  
                            - Slow moving harmonic changes  
                            - Perpetual motion                                                |
| Florence Price           | - Lush, singing melodies  
                            - Incorporated spirituals into large works (“Wade in the Water” was used in the first movement of her Symphony #4.)  
                            - Used syncopated rhythmic patterns                               |
| Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  | - Melody and accompaniment  
                            - Alberti bass  
                            - Symmetrical phrases  
                            - Tonal                                                         |

After listening and reflecting on an individual’s style, try taking a familiar melody and adding characteristic elements. For example, it might be as simple as playing “Happy Birthday” on the piano with the damper pedal down, à la Debussy. Demonstrate and model as appropriate, and modify and adjust according to skill level, age and experience of students.

LEARNING CHECKLIST

☐ I can explain that musicians and composers are influenced and inspired by various things.
☐ I can sing and listen to music from a variety of cultures.
☐ I can generate and develop original artistic ideas.
☐ I can identify and describe characteristic elements of different composers’ styles.