

WHAT'S THE STORY?

LESSON/ACTIVITY PLAN

OBJECTIVE:

1. Students demonstrate understanding that vocal music from both the Western classical tradition and from traditional Hmong culture tell stories.
2. Students will develop active listening skills.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Review basic descriptions of traditional vocal Hmong music from the Class Notes Artists PowerPoint.
2. Play examples vocal music from the Western classical tradition and from traditional Hmong culture. Purposefully select a variety of pieces—some in a language that the students may understand, others in a language they do not speak. (There are a few examples of at the end of this lesson plan.) Feel free to add and supplement with your own ideas.

After listening, ask a series of questions for class discussions or ask them as prompts for in-class journal entries. Questions might include:

- Do you think the singer is telling a story?
- What do you think the story is about?
- How do you know?
- What emotion or emotions does the singer express?

Encourage students to use music vocabulary learned in class (terms like *staccato* or *forte*) and give bonus points if they use those words correctly.

3. If done as a writing exercise, share your findings in class. Ask each student to choose one entry to tell a partner, or begin or end class with one student reporting to the whole group.
4. This exercise can easily be expanded to include other genres.



SUGGESTED PIECES FOR LISTENING/WATCHING:

Kwv Txhij:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WNnl-CIKvPo&feature=youtu.be>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YUO4-whpl50>

Paj Huam:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i-4-0o_1c8o&feature=youtu.be

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HDDRDMTb-rA>

Western vocal classical music:

Cecelia Bartoli singing Mozart's [*Vado, ma dove? Oh Dei!*](#)

Claudia Oh singing [*Nuit d'étoiles*](#) by Debussy

The highly expressive Maria Callas singing Bellini's [*Casta Diva*](#)

Legendary soprano Leontyne Price singing Verdi's [*O Patria Mia*](#)

STANDARDS:

1. Grades K – 3. 1. Artistic Foundations 3. Demonstrate understanding of the personal, social, cultural and historical contexts that influence the arts area. Music. 0.1.3.3.1. Identify the characteristics of music from a variety of cultures including contributions of Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities.
2. Grades K – 3. 4. Artistic Process: Respond or Critique 1. Respond to or critique a variety of creations of performances using the artistic foundations. Music. 0.4.1.3.1. Compare and contrast the characteristics of performances using the artistic foundations.
3. Grades 4 – 5. 1. Artistic Foundations 3. Demonstrate understanding of the personal, social, cultural and historical contexts that influence the arts areas. Music. 4.1.3.3.1. Describe the cultural and historical traditions of music including the contributions of Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities.
4. Grades 4 – 5. 4. Artistic Process: Respond or Critique.1. Respond to or critique a variety of creations and performances using the artistic foundations. Music. 4.4.1.3.1. Justify personal interpretations and reactions to a variety of musical works or performances.



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