

Dear Teacher:

Welcome to *New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music*, an exhibition organized by the Smithsonian Institution's Museum on Main Street program and brought to you by your state humanities council. These materials and activities were compiled to help your students observe, imagine, learn & contribute to the discussion of American roots music during their visit to the exhibition.

While it's desirable to participate in each step, it's certainly not required. In fact, each individual piece will provide your students with thought-provoking questions and activities. You can easily customize lessons or even develop your own methods of exploring roots music!

The lesson plans that accompany *New Harmonies* will help you create a meaningful experience for your students. Each includes **Pre-visit**, **Visit**, and **Post-visit** activities. All the lessons can be adapted for younger or older audiences, so evaluate each lesson before selecting activities for your students.

The **Pre-visit** step is designed to be simple, to introduce the students to the exhibit topic, and to be easy to implement. This step is intended to stimulate the students' curiosity and help students gather information for use in visit and post-visit activities.

The **Visit** step is focused on information gathering. This is a time for the students to explore and read the exhibit content, enjoy audio samples, and utilize interactive components. The activity worksheets included in this section will help students gather enough information to apply their knowledge in a later classroom activity. With all activities and worksheets, students can work individually or in groups.

The **Post-visit** step consists of ideas and activities to implement after your return to the classroom. This step involves higher-level thinking skills such as interpretation, synthesis, thinking hypothetically, and/or expressing judgment. Through these experiences, students will gain a deeper understanding of the topic "American roots music."

Thank you!

The Museum on Main Street Team

LESSON 1
GETTING TO KNOW THE SONGS OF AMERICAN ROOTS MUSIC

Lesson Objectives (suggested grade levels: 4-8)

In this lesson, students will be able to recognize various types of roots music and identify the origins of certain musical styles.

National Standards

Social Studies:

Culture: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.

People, Places & Environments: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, place, and environments.

English Language Arts:

Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g. libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.

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Worksheet 7: *My Favorite Artist*

Post-visit

Activity 1: *Sing Your Song*

Activity 2: *Build an Instrument*

Activity 3: *Share Your Voice*

LESSON 2
AMERICAN ROOTS MUSIC: THE BIG PICTURE

Lesson Objectives (suggested grade levels: 4-8)

In this lesson, students will be able to discover the rich heritage of American roots music, compare it to their own musical heritage, and learn the context in which the music was developed.

National Standards:

Social Studies:

Culture: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.

Time, Continuity, & Change: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the ways human beings view themselves in and over time.

People, Places & Environments: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, place, and environments.

English Language Arts:

Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g. libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.

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Post-visit

Activity 1: *The Big Picture*

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LESSON 3
LYRICS AND MOTION IN ACTION!

Lesson Objectives (suggested grade levels: 4-8)

In this lesson, students will focus on identifying lyrics and rhythms found in American roots music. They will also compare the music featured in the exhibition to the music they listen to, and ultimately will be able to write their own stanza. Music is a form of personal expression, and they will be able to experience it.

National Standards:

Social Studies:

Culture: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.

Time, Continuity, & Change: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the ways human beings view themselves in and over time.

People, Places & Environments: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, place, and environments.

English Language Arts:

Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.

Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g. libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.

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Lesson Objectives (suggested grade levels: 4-8)

In this lesson, students will be able to recognize various types of roots music and identify the origins of certain musical styles.

National Standards*Social Studies:*

Culture: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.

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English Language Arts:

Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g. libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

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CONTENTS**Pre-visit**

Worksheet 1: *What is Your Favorite Music?*

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Worksheet 3: *Sacred Songs*

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Worksheet 7: *My Favorite Artist*

Post-visit

Activity 1: *Sing Your Song*

Activity 2: *Build an Instrument*

Activity 3: *Share Your Voice*

Materials

Various materials to make homemade instruments (instructions and an exact materials list can be found at

<http://homeschooling.gomilpitas.com/explore/homemademusic.htm>)

Lesson 1: Teacher Instructions

Each lesson is intended to prepare students for a visit to *New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music* and to follow up on that visit after your return to the classroom.

The **Pre-Visit** worksheets are designed to stimulate the students' curiosity about the exhibition and to encourage the students to explore their own musical roots. The **Visit** activities invite the students to collect information and apply their new-found knowledge in the classroom. The **Post-Visit** activities draw on their own heritage and the information learned during their museum visit. All of these activities can be completed in groups or by individual students.

Pre-Visit

Several days before visiting the exhibit, make copies of *Worksheet 1: What is Your Favorite Music?* and *Worksheet 2: A Music Interview: Do You Remember?* for all of the students. Hand out both sheets a few days before the visit so that students have enough time to interview friends and/or family.

Visit

Before going to the exhibit, divide your class into four groups. Each group will receive a different worksheet, either *Worksheet 3: Sacred Songs*; *Worksheet 4: Country*; *Worksheet 5: Blues*; or *Worksheet 6: Dance*.

All four forms should be used as students explore the exhibition. Make sure each student has a pencil (not pen) to write down the information. (Pens make permanent marks, and museums generally prefer the use of pencils in their exhibits.) You may wish to collect the papers from the students before leaving the exhibition.

Post-Visit

After returning from your visit, targeted classroom activities will help the students apply information learned during the exhibition visit. These activities involve higher-level thinking skills such as interpretation, synthesis, thinking hypothetically and/or expressing judgment.

PRE-VISIT

Worksheet 1: What is Your Favorite Music?

Background

“Roots music” is a relatively new term. It first appeared in print and conversation in the early 1980s. Originally, it meant “roots of popular music or rock and roll,” but today it has come to mean all music that has grown out of older folk traditions.

Roots music is sacred and secular (religious and non-religious), rural and urban, acoustic and electric, simple and complex, old and new. Performed by one musician or by an entire band, in concert halls and on back porches, roots music is America’s sound.

The exhibit you will be visiting is about American roots music. Answer these questions about your favorite music before you go to the exhibition:

1. What is your favorite kind of music and why?

2. Ask family and friends what their favorite songs are and write down the titles, words from the songs, and the artists’ names in the chart below:

| Family/Friend name: | Favorite Song/ Lyrics | Artist: |
|---------------------|-----------------------|---------|
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| | | |

PRE-VISIT*Worksheet 2: A Music Interview: Do You Remember?***Background**

New Harmonies features several styles of music:

- Sacred music (religious music including spirituals, gospel, and hymns)
- Country music (Appalachian folk music, country western, bluegrass, western swing)
- Blues (rural and urban varieties)
- Dance (Cajun, zydeco, tejano, conjunto, polka, klezmer)
- Folk revival (a popular resurgence of other roots music styles)

Ask friends or family members the following questions. Be sure to read the description of that particular style of music before asking the question. Remember to jot down whom you interviewed.

Sacred Music: Early American sacred music, into the 1800s, included native chants, British hymns, and African religious music. These music forms blended into spirituals, and eventually, gospel music.

1. Please record any experiences you have had with religious music or spirituals.
2. Have you ever been to a powwow or heard Native American drumming?
3. Did you know that Elvis Presley's favorite music was gospel music. Other current artists are also inspired by gospel music. Name some artists.
4. Have you or your family/friends ever listened to Mahalia Jackson, the Soul Stirrers, Marion Williams, or Blackwood Brothers? Can you name others?

Country: Early Country music was influenced by folk songs brought by immigrants from the British Isles. Over time, country music began to morph into new sounds rooted in regional styles like Western Swing and Bluegrass.

5. Have you ever heard of the Carter Family or Jimmie Rodgers? If so, name a song they performed.

6. Name three country musicians and a song by each. Have you heard Patsy Cline or Hank Williams played on the radio?

7. Name three instruments often played in various forms of country music.

Blues: Blues influenced many other styles of music like country, gospel, and even helped form rock and roll, and rap. Influential blues musicians include Robert Johnson, B.B. King, and Ma Rainey.

8. Think about the name "the blues." What subjects do blues artists sing about?

9. What instruments do you think blues musicians play and why?

Dance: American immigrants bring cultural traditions with them. When those traditions combine with other roots music styles, new sounds are created. Whether they perform Cajun, zydeco, tejano, conjunto, polka, or klezmer, musicians use their accordions and other instruments to produce rhythmic music often associated with dances and cultural celebrations.

10. Have you ever heard an accordion or seen someone play it? What type of music did they play? Where did you hear or see the accordion?

11. The accordion came to America with German and Italian immigrants. Where are your family's roots? What instrument(s) do you associate with those cultures?


Revival: In the early 1960s, a folk and roots music revival began in America, led by the success of such artists as the Kingston Trio, Joan Baez, and Bob Dylan. These songs, popular on college campuses in the 1960s, often had a political message and inspired civil rights and other social advocates.

12. Name three folk revival artists and as many song titles as you can.

VISIT*Worksheet 3: Sacred Songs***Background**

The foundations of American music lie in the religious yearnings of Native Americans, European settlers, and Africans brought to the colonies in bondage. Some European settlers came to the New World to escape religious persecution, and they brought with them songs and hymns steeped in their religious traditions. In the colonies, Africans retained as many music traditions as possible. The drums and rhythms of West African religious music would have a tremendous impact on American hymns. As these distinct cultures came together on North American soil, their spiritual music blended to express a new American diversity.

Complete the following questions as you go through the section on Sacred Songs.

1. Describe the music played by Native Americans, Europeans, and Africans. What instruments were used? Why does the music sound the way it does?
2. What are three ways that spirituals sound different from gospel music. What are the roots of each of these styles of music?
3. Listen to the gospel audio. Describe how Southern gospel sounds different from gospel. List three artists from each style.
4. List all the instruments you found that were used in the *Sacred Songs* section of the exhibition.
5.  Listen to the examples of sacred music available at the gospel music stand and at the listening station. What song was most interesting to you in this section? What did you like about the song (singer, instrument/s, beat, or lyrics)?

VISIT*Worksheet 4: Country***Background**


The origins of modern country music can be traced to folk songs and ballads brought to North America by settlers from the British Isles. In America, musicians all over played country music and added their own creativity and regional playing styles to develop new sounds and rhythms. Jimmie Rodgers, a guitar player and singer from Mississippi, added the influences of blues musicians to his music and became country music's first major star. In the West, musicians combined Mexican music with American country music to create country western or western swing music. In the East, musicians in the Appalachians used faster rhythms and vocal harmonies to create a style known as bluegrass.

Complete the following questions as you go through the section on Country.

1. What are other names given to what we now know as "country" music? What instruments were used by early country musicians? Name famous early country music artists mentioned in the exhibition.

2. Why did these distinct styles of country music develop?


3. List all the instruments you found that were used in the *Country* music section of the exhibition:

4.  Listen to the samples of country music available at the listening station. What song was most interesting to you in the *Country* music section of the exhibit? What did you like about the song (singer, instrument/s, beat, or lyrics)?

VISIT***Worksheet 5: Blues*****Background**

Robert Santelli, blues scholar and *New Harmonies* exhibition curator, said that “the Blues was so deep and so wide, it made room for everybody and touched nearly everyone in American music.” African Americans used the blues to sing away their sorrows, provide comic relief in the face of unbearable social conditions, and celebrate their culture. During the Great Depression, thousands of African Americans moved into urban areas in search of new opportunities. Blues artists who moved to cities like Chicago soon developed “urban” blues traditions and made the blues famous worldwide.


Complete the following questions as you go through the section on the Blues.

1. What do you think the quote above by Robert Santelli means?
2. What was it about blues that helped listeners feel connected to the music?
3. What are some of the social and economic realities that blues musicians sang about?
4. What was distinctive about the vocal patterns that blues musicians included in their songs?
5. List all the instruments you found that were used in the *Blues* section of the exhibition. Why would blues musicians often make their own instruments?
6. What are some of the differences between rural and urban blues? Did urban artists use different instruments?
7.  Listen to the samples of blues music available at the listening station. What is your favorite song in the exhibit? What did you like about the song (singer, instrument/s, beat, or lyrics)?

VISIT
Worksheet 6: Dance
Background

American roots music draws inspiration from many sources, blending songs with origins from around the world. Cajun is a blend of French lullabies and folk songs, black Creole music, dance tunes, and country music. In French-speaking, southwest Louisiana, a blend of Cajun music and the blues surfaced after World War II. Later, rhythm and blues entered the mix, and the result was called zydeco. Tejano music evolved in Texas and the Southwest from Mexican dance and folk, American country, jazz, polka, and Cajun music. Each music style features the accordion.

Complete the following questions as you go through the section on Dance.

1. What are some of the instruments, rhythms, and themes that bind together the music styles listed in this section?
2. Where might you hear each of these musical styles played today? Why do you think these styles retain such strong cultural connections to the communities in which they developed?
3. Compare and contrast these two styles of music by listening to the samples in the section and at the central listening station. What do they have in common? What makes them different? Do they play different instruments, or are they the same?
4. Where did tejano and conjunto music develop? What musical styles were combined to form tejano music?
5. What are the differences in instruments used in polka and klezmer? Why are polka and klezmer often associated with celebratory occasions?
6. List all the instruments you found that were used in the *Dance* section of the exhibition:
7.  Listen to the samples of each genre of music available in the *Dance* section and at the listening station. What is your favorite song in this section of the exhibit? What did you like about the song (singer, instrument/s, beat, or lyrics)?

VISIT
Worksheet 7: My Favorite Artist

Use this sheet to write down information about a musician in New Harmonies that you found interesting. Put your worksheet in a safe place. You may be using it when you get back to the classroom!

Name of musician: _____

Style of music associated with the musician: _____

1. What is important about this artist and her or his musical style?

2. What are some of the songs or lyrics associated with the artist?

3. Why are you interested in this artist? Have you heard this musician's songs before? Do you know of the musician through your family or friends?

4. Imagine that your favorite musician was just starting out in the music business. If you were trying to convince a music executive that they should give this artist a big record deal, what would you say?

POST-VISIT***Activity 1: Sing Your Song*****Background**

The songs featured in the exhibition are excellent examples of American roots music. Each is a classic song that resonates with Americans for many reasons.

This activity will allow each group of students to share their selection with classmates and to discuss their interest in songs they noted as their favorites on *Worksheets 3, 4, 5, and 6*.

1. As a class, or as a group at the end of the visit, have students share their favorite songs and explain why they selected the song.
2. Work with a music teacher or visit the Smithsonian Global Sound website at <http://www.globalsound.org> to locate recordings and lyrics and have students practice or perform the songs in music class. Lyrics for many of their favorites also may be found at <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/music.htm>.
3. Discuss whether or not the students found their favorite music in the exhibit.
4. Ask the students if they knew any of the music before they visited the exhibit. Are they inclined to purchase a CD or download music by any of the musicians they learned about?
5. Create a scenario where your students are designing their own exhibition about roots music in the year 2030. Name some of today's musicians who might be included in the exhibit?

POST-VISIT***Activity 2: Build an Instrument*****Background**

Many instruments used in roots music are homemade by musicians. Whether created to reflect their local musical traditions or to produce specific sounds, roots musicians find creative ways to turn ordinary items into versatile musical instruments.

The diddley bow is a simple stringed instrument, often built of wood planks and stretched wire that was commonly built and played by African-American sharecroppers in the Mississippi Delta. It probably originated in West Africa. Many well-known blues musicians, including B.B. King and Muddy Waters, played the diddley bow before they learned to play the guitar. This activity challenges students to think about why musicians build instruments, how they use them, and what sounds originate from homemade instruments.

1. Ask students to do research on homemade instruments like blocks, spoons, beans in a bottle, stretched strings, pot lids, and combs. Have each student select an instrument and build it! Ideas for building additional instruments can be found at:
<http://homeschooling.gomilpitas.com/explore/homemademusic.htm>
2. Have students play their instruments as they sing a song they selected from the exhibition.
3. Encourage students to write their own songs and play them using the instruments they've created. Students could form bands or perform solo acts. Set up a variety show of different acts.
4. Discuss why there are so many homemade instruments in American roots music.

POST-VISIT***Activity 3: Share Your Voice*****Background**

Music has great appeal to individuals. Listeners may be attracted to the subject of a song, to an instrument, to the rhythm, to the lyrics, or to an artist. This activity asks students to report on a musician in the exhibit that they found most interesting and challenges them to learn more about the backgrounds of the artists.

Have your students pull out *Worksheet 7: My Favorite Artist*. Encourage them to use the worksheet when thinking about the questions below.

1. Have students share information about their favorite musicians with classmates. Ask students to explain why they liked the musician and talk about the type of music performed by the artist.
2. Ask students to complete further research, at the library or on the Internet, on the musician and locate a song performed by the artist. Have them write down song lyrics and interpret what they believe the words mean.
3. Hold a mock Grammy Award ceremony in the classroom. Have students vote for their favorite song. Invite the student(s) whose song was selected to deliver a mock acceptance speech in the style of that musician.

Lesson Objectives (suggested grade levels: 4-8)

In this lesson, students will be able to discover the rich heritage of American roots music, compare it to their own musical heritage, and learn the context in which the music was developed.

National Standards:*Social Studies:*

Culture: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.

Time, Continuity, & Change: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the ways human beings view themselves in and over time.

People, Places & Environments: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, place, and environments.

English Language Arts:

Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g. libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.

CONTENT**Pre-visit**

Worksheet 1: *What are My Roots?*

Visit

Worksheet 2: *Global Origins*

Worksheet 3: *Themes of American Roots Music*

Post-visit

Activity 1: *The Big Picture*

Activity 2: *Musical Heritage*

Materials

World map; CD player or web access to *New Harmonies* favorites on www.museumonmainstreet.org

Lesson 2: Background

Much of American roots music came from immigrants from Europe, enslaved peoples from West and Central Africa, and Native Americans already here. Over time, European and African music traditions blended to create a variety of roots music forms, including folk ballads, country, blues, and gospel. As new waves of immigrants came to America, they added their music traditions to the mix.

Music is often a connecting force between the immigrant experience and the process of “becoming an American.” Whether students in your classroom are recent immigrants or have deep roots in America, their families have unique musical traditions.

Teacher Instructions

Each lesson is intended to prepare students for a visit to *New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music* and to follow up on that visit after your return to the classroom.

The **Pre-Visit** worksheets are designed to stimulate the students’ curiosity about the exhibition and to encourage the students to explore their own musical roots. The **Visit** activities invite the students to collect information and apply their new-found knowledge in the classroom. The **Post-Visit** activities draw on their own heritage and the information learned during their museum visit. All of these activities can be completed in groups or by individual students.

Pre-visit

Several days before visiting the exhibit, make copies of *Worksheet 1: What are My Roots* for all of the students. Hand out the sheets a few days before your visit so that students have enough time to interview friends and/or family. If a student is unable to interview a family member or does not have access to the information, allow the student to select a country and research its musical traditions.

Use name tags or other stickers, and have each student write the probable country of origin of their family or the country that the student selected on the stickers (one country per sticker). On the day that students visit the exhibit, have them wear these stickers.

Using a dictionary, have students (individually or as a class) define the following:

Freedom
Democracy
Independence
Diversity
Ingenuity

Lead a discussion about the meaning of these words and how they may relate to the themes of American Roots Music. The meanings of these words in the exhibit are from a musical perspective, and the comparison with the definitions from the dictionary (and the musical applications) can set up an interesting discussion.

Post a map of the world in the classroom and ask students to put a pin on their family's country of origin or the country that the students selected for study. If time allows, ask them to share some information about the musical traditions of that country.

Visit

Before going to the exhibit, make a copy of *Worksheet 2: Themes of American Roots Music* for each student.

At the exhibition, pass out this worksheet. As students explore *New Harmonies*, ask them to complete the worksheet (individually or in small groups). The worksheet is designed to help students collect information that will be used in the Post-visit activity.

Make sure each student has a pencil (not pen) to write down the information. (Pens make permanent marks, and museums generally prefer the use of pencils in their exhibits.) You may wish to collect the papers from the students before leaving the exhibition.

Post-visit

After returning to the classroom, targeted activities will help the students apply information learned during the exhibition visit. These activities involve higher-level thinking skills such as interpretation, synthesis, thinking hypothetically and/or expressing judgment.

PRE-VISIT

Worksheet 1: *What are my Roots?*

BACKGROUND

Find out where your ancestors lived. Ask your parent, guardian, or relatives. There may be several countries of origin included in your family history. Try to record them all.

Country of origin: _____

1. Research the musical traditions of countries in your family's history. List three interesting facts about music played in those countries.

2. Describe any musical traditions or celebrations that your family enjoys.

3. Name some instruments that are played, or have been played, by you or your family.

4. When and how did your family members learn how to play these instruments?

5. Are there any annual heritage music festivals in your community? If so, identify the type of music played there.



VISIT

Worksheet 2: *Global Origins*

Find the roots of American roots music!

1. Write down three countries or regions in the world that you find mentioned in the exhibit related to American roots music. Indicate what music came from each place.

2. List the instruments in the exhibition and what country they came from.

3. Identify any musical styles, instruments, or musicians that came from countries in your family history.

4. Choose a song that is in the exhibit that you really like. Explain why you like it.

VISIT

Worksheet 3: *Themes of American Roots Music*

Draw a line from the theme to its correct description:

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| <i>Ingenuity</i> | <i>In American roots music everyone is invited to participate. Music is an avenue for people to make their voices heard.</i> |
| <i>Independence</i> | <i>American roots music comes from many different peoples from many different parts of the world. As waves of immigrants came to America, they added their music traditions to the mix.</i> |
| <i>Freedom</i> | <i>Every musician finds his or her own way</i> |
| <i>Democracy</i> | <i>Many roots musicians are creative in developing new songs and new instruments. Singers swap songs and rhythms. Spoons and washboards become musical instruments.</i> |
| <i>Diversity</i> | <i>Musicians are free to choose, to change, or to hang on to what's important to them in their music. Country singers borrow from the blues. Blues musicians pick up a thing or two from country. In music, barriers fall.</i> |

Consider the definitions above:

- Find songs and/or lyrics in the exhibit that reflect each of the themes
- Explain why each of your choices is a good example for that theme

| | Songs and/or lyrics | Explanation |
|--------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Freedom | | |
| Democracy | | |
| Independence | | |
| Diversity | | |
| Ingenuity | | |

POST-VISIT

Activity 1: The Big Picture

1. Designate a place in the classroom for each of the exhibition themes (freedom, democracy, independence, diversity, ingenuity), and divide the class into five groups so that each group represents one of the themes. Ask the students to go to the designated area for their theme.
2. Once in their groups, ask students to share information about the songs they thought best represented their theme. It may be helpful if students consult their answers from *Worksheet 2: Themes of American Roots Music*.
3. Each group should select one song (or lyrics from a song) to share with the class. This song will be the group's theme song. Students can use the Internet to find lyrics and listen to the music. Lyrics for many of their favorites may be found at <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/music.htm>.
4. After each group has finished the assignment, ask the groups to share their findings with the class. Each group will play the selected theme song or read song lyrics. Have the groups explain their exhibition themes (freedom, democracy, independence, diversity, ingenuity) and the definition as it pertains to the exhibition.

POST-VISIT**Activity 2: *Musical Heritage***

1. Post a world map on the classroom wall and ask students to put a pin in the country or location of their family's places of origin or of countries that they researched in the Pre-visit activity. This may be done before going to visit the exhibition.
2. Study the world map and find out how many countries are represented by the heritage of the students in the classroom. Using *Worksheet 1: What are My Roots?* and *Worksheet 2: Global Origins*, allow students to share the information they gathered about their family roots and the musical traditions from their places of origin.
3. Lead a discussion about the spread and impact of music that came to America from other countries. Ask students if they heard or read about music from their own countries of origin in the exhibition. If not, do the students think music from their backgrounds will be discussed in some future Smithsonian exhibit? Why or why not?
4. If there are any local musical groups or music festivals in your area related to American roots music, encourage your students to attend for extra credit. Have them write a journal entry or be a reporter about the event. How many people were there? What kind of music was played? How did the audience respond to the music?
5. If possible, invite a local musician to the classroom to play music from his/her own musical heritage.

Lesson Objectives (suggested grade levels: 4-8)

In this lesson, students will focus on identifying lyrics and rhythms found in American roots music. They will also compare the music featured in the exhibition to the music they listen to, and ultimately will be able to write their own stanza. Music is a form of personal expression, and they will be able to experience it.

National Standards:

Social Studies:

Culture: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.

Time, Continuity, & Change: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the ways human beings view themselves in and over time.

People, Places & Environments: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, place, and environments.

English Language Arts:

Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.

Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g. libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.

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Computer with internet access

Lesson 3: Teacher Instructions and Background

What is meaningful in your life? Musicians reflect on their lives and the world around them through their songs. Gospel artists are inspired to sing about their religious faith and spirituality. Blues songs feature lyrics about the realities of poverty, racism, and broken relationships. Folk musicians have long been inspired to speak out on social and political causes in their music. All roots musicians challenge and celebrate America through their songs.

Each lesson is intended to prepare students for a visit to *New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music* and to follow up on that visit after your return to the classroom.

The **Pre-visit** worksheet is designed to encourage students to think about their own personal interests in music. The **Visit** activities invite the students to collect information and apply their new-found knowledge in the classroom. The **Post-visit** activities draw on their own heritage and the information learned during their museum visit. All of these activities can be completed in groups or by individual students.

Pre-visit

Several days before visiting the exhibit, make copies of Worksheet 1: *Is Music Part of Your Life?* for all of the students. Distribute the worksheet a few days before the visit so that students have enough time to consider their personal musical interests.

Visit

Before going to the exhibit, copy Worksheet 2: *Explore the Exhibition: Look, Listen, and Move!* for each student in the class. Hand out the page to each student just before the students do the activity. (Preferably, this will occur after any guided tours or as part of the scavenger hunt.) Make sure each student has a pencil (not pen) to write down the information. (Pens make permanent marks, and museums generally prefer the use of pencils in their exhibits.) You may wish to collect the papers from the students before leaving the exhibition.

Post-visit

After returning from your visit, targeted classroom activities will help the students apply information learned during the exhibition visit. These activities involve higher-level thinking skills such as interpretation, synthesis, thinking hypothetically, and/or expressing judgment.

PRE-VISIT

Worksheet 1: *Is Music Part of Your Life?*

BACKGROUND

Music is all around us—on the radio, on television, on the computer. As you prepare to visit *New Harmonies*, think about how music is a part of your life.

1. What's on your playlist? What are some things you like about that type of music?
2. Do you like to sing? Name some of the songs that you like to sing. Write down the words to one of your favorite songs.
3. Do you know how to read music? Do you sing in a choir or group? Describe some of your experiences singing with a group.
4. Do you play an instrument? If so, what instrument? Do you play in a band? What type of music does your group play? What have been some of your experiences playing for others?
5. Do you have family/friends who either sing or play an instrument? Who are they and what do they play? Do any of them perform in public? Have you seen them perform in public? What is it like to watch them?

VISIT

Worksheet 2: *Explore the Exhibition: Look, Listen and Move!*

BACKGROUND

As you tour *New Harmonies*, look and listen for lyrics and pay attention to the beats and rhythms you hear in the music. Use the information you gather during your tour to answer the questions below.

1. Write down the lyrics that interest you in *Sacred Songs*:
2. Write down the phrases that appealed to you in *Country*:
3. Write down the lyrics that were stirring to you in the *Blues*:
4. Write down the lyrics that you especially like in *Dance*:
5. Find lyrics that say something about a social cause:
6. Find lyrics that make you feel good about your country:
7. Find lyrics written in a language other than English:
8. As you listen to the music in the exhibit, does it inspire you to move to the rhythm? Do different songs make you want to dance or clap your hands? Which songs? Why?
9. Write down the name of the song in which you really felt the rhythm:

POST-VISIT**Activity 1: *I've Got the Blues*****BACKGROUND**

Musicians express their thoughts and feelings through the songs that they write. Their lyrics can convey happiness or sadness, celebrate cultural traditions, or challenge authority.

This activity will allow students to reflect on the information they gathered in the exhibition and apply it to create their own songs based on their own interests. Students can work individually, in pairs, or in groups.

1. The basic style of early blues songs included a three-line stanza. The first two lines were generally the same lyrics, followed by a "response" from the musician's guitar. The third line featured a rhyming response to the idea in the first two lines.

An example of the three-line stanza:

*Everyday, everyday I have the blues
Ooh, everyday, everyday I have the blues
When you see me worryin' baby, yeah it's you I hate to lose.*
—From "Everyday I Have the Blues," by B.B. King

2. Blues songs can be about anything! Students can write a three-line stanza about their breakfast, a ride on the school bus, walking to school, classes, their pet, their friends, their family—whatever they want to talk about. Blues lyrics can be happy or sad.
3. Now, the student(s) should recite the lyrics aloud and listen to the flow. Usually, they have to repeat them several times to find the rhythm in the stanza. Does it rhyme? Next, have them read the lyrics to a friend and see what they think. Have the student(s) think about how the stanza compares to the words and rhythms in their favorite songs.
4. Are there any musicians in the class? Have students put their words to the music of a famous blues song. They could also play two similar lines of music as other students recite their stanzas, or perhaps the music teacher could accompany students as they recite their stanzas.

POST-VISIT

Activity 2: *Music Bee*

BACKGROUND

Remember the television game show *Name That Tune*? This activity will test students' knowledge of the various styles of roots music they encountered in the exhibition. Have a computer with internet access available for listening to music samples.

1. Divide the class into two teams. Students can work as a team and shout out answers, or students can be called one-at-a-time to answer questions in a spelling bee-style format.
2. Select several music samples from one of the New Harmonies-related playlists available at the digital music services listed below. Play them at random. Have the students guess the song, artist, or style of music.

Music services:

iTunes *New Harmonies* iMix:

<http://phobos.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewIMix?id=217996522>

3. Track each teams' scores on the blackboard.