

## A JAZZ TALK SHOW

**Grades:** 4-8

**Subject areas:** Music, History, Language Arts, Theatre

**Estimated time of completion:** 6 - 50 minute sessions

### **Summary:**

Students will explore the lives of various jazz musicians. They will become familiar with the social and historical events that present during the lives of these individuals. They will listen to the music of the artists and become knowledgeable about their styles. This activity will culminate in the production of a news/talk show created and performed by the students highlighting the lives of these musical figures.



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### **Objectives:**

- Students will listen to, analyze, and describe music.
- Students will gain an understanding of music in relation to history and culture.
- Students will gain experience in theatre arts skills.
- Students will gain experience in the general skills and strategies of writing.
- Students will gain experience in the general skills and strategies of reading.
- Students will use the Internet to do research.

### **Music**

- Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
- Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

### **History**

- Understands the folklore and other cultural contributions from various regions of the United States and how they helped to form a national heritage.



### **Language Arts**

- Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies of writing.
- Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies of reading.
- Gathers and uses information for research purposes.

### **Technology**

- Knows the characteristics and uses of computer hardware and software including the Internet.

## Theatre

- Demonstrates competence in writing scripts.
- Uses acting skills.

Designs and produces informal and formal productions



## Materials:

- Computer(s) with Internet access will be used for online activity and research
- Available library resources
- Available jazz recordings
- Available video equipment
- Writing materials

## Procedure:

### 1. <http://pbskids.org/jazz/nowthen/index.html>

Access the **Then** component of **Now and Then**. As a class, read some of the biographical material on the musicians found there and listen to the sound bites. Use the questions below to spark discussion about the information they have just been exploring.

- What did these musicians share in common?
  - What were the events and/or social influences that shaped their music?
  - Ask the students if any of them share anything in common with these musicians (i.e. play the same instrument, live or have lived in the same region/city as the musician, etc.)
2. Move to the **Now** area. Read some of the student submissions. Share any thoughts the students have on these:
- Are there any experiences in this section that they can personally relate to? What? Why?
  - What comparisons can you make with the musical experiences read in the student submissions in “Now” and the biographies in “Then”?
3. Explain to the class that they are going to be creating a talk show. The focus of this show is jazz and they will be interviewing famous historical and contemporary jazz personalities. Students will choose several jazz musicians to research. These will be some of the guests on the show. After the personalities are selected, divide students into groups to begin researching them. (The number of personalities and students assigned to each will depend on class size and available computer access and resources).

4. Research can be done online, at home, the library, etc. All students will contribute to the scripting stations used by the hosts. This will be based upon their research. Students should carefully consider the different perspectives they were exposed to in Now and Then and create questions that will reveal biographical, historical and social/cultural events that are prevalent in the time of the musician's life and are/were influences on their music when interviewing their musical guests. Students should have listened to (and may incorporate into the show) sound bites/recordings of the famous musician's music.
5. When research is completed, students will select individuals to play the parts of the musicians they have studied. A host and co-host will also be selected. Students will perform this show in an available venue (i.e. for another music class, parent, etc.)
6. Written research will be handed into the teacher for evaluation. This can take the form deemed appropriate by the teacher (notes collected during research citing sources, reports including resources, etc.)



### **Assessment:**

- Students should have completed all assignments and actively participated in all discussions.
- Teacher assessment of student's knowledge on various musical figures through observation and anecdotal notes of performance.
- Student evaluation of project:
  - Was enough information shared about the musician during the interview?
  - If not, what else should have been included?
  - Were audio musical examples used?
  - What were the strong points in the presentation? Weak points?
  - Suggest on area that could be improved and how you would do it?
  - What was the most outstanding/interesting thing you learned during this process?

### **Extensions and Adaptations**

This presentation could be video taped and shown (in whole or segments) as part of the school news and/or in other classrooms.

- Commercials (aural and/or video) advertising the show could also be taped. These commercials should be related to upcoming school events (public service announcements) or musically relate. (I.e. commercial for a fictitious brand of the instrument played by the guest on that segment of the show).
- Students could write theme music for the show and include it at the beginning and in advertisements.
- Interview local jazz musicians. Videotape these interviews to be used on the show. Invite these musicians to come on the show "live" and meet with the class and play for the students.