

Lesson Plan: Haitian Music!

Overview

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Learning Objectives:

- **Technical:** Students will categorize genres of musical styles from Haiti and the Haitian diaspora.
- **Cognitive:** Students will contrast styles from different time periods in order to understand different historical influences and forces affecting Haiti.
- **Socioemotional:** Students will apply their personal relationship with music to understanding music from Haiti's history.

Materials Needed:

- Slide Presentation of Kompa and Hip-Hop Creole
- Timeline of Music from the 1800s and early 1900s (In the slideshow)
- Access to Spotify

Research Question: How has Haiti's history affected the development of Kompa and Hip Hop Creole?

Lesson Description: In this lesson plan, the goal for students learning on a personal note is to realize it is important to learn Haitian music because sometimes you might find out more if you listen closely to the music. Music can only be expressed through instruments, melodies, and lyrics. It is a unique form of expression. You can only learn so much from reading a textbook or a video that is about facts. But I feel like you can understand a story on a deeper level by listening to music; it will help you understand the emotion. You can learn so much more about your own identity, culture, and connections with knowing the history behind music.

Warm up: Discussion: What cultural music does your household listen to? How does music play a role in your life? Why?

- **Activity 1:** Putting your creativity towards your background
- **Activity 2:** Name that Genre! Bonus points if you can name that instrument!
- **Activity 3:** An adventure into Haitian Music!

Warm up: (10-15 mins)

Before the students start they will have a discussion talking about each of their cultural musical backgrounds. They can talk about how it plays an important role in their life, what the songs are about? What instruments are they familiar with in their culture? And how does music play a role in their day to day life?

Activity 1: *Putting your creativity towards your background!*

Overview: This activity is about making a poem, song, or drawing. Sometimes you don't even realize how the history of where you came from makes you who you are today, how much of an impact it has on our music, our daily lives, and our future. In the song "Lady Haiti", Wyclef Jean is talking about how Haiti has gone through a lot of suffering, like natural disasters and slavery. In one of his verses, Jean talks about how Haiti breaks free and becomes independent in 1804 and because of that he can be anything. In this activity, have the students think about where they come from and how it has impacted them.


Instructions:

1. Refer to slide 7, and click the link to Wyclef Jean's song "Lady Haiti."
2. Listen to the passion in his voice whilst singing those meaningful lyrics describing his country Haiti. (Spend 5 minutes reading through the lyrics and listening).
3. Refer back to slide 7 to see a verse I provided that shows his emotions, his country's hardships, and how he feels.
4. Now think about the country you or your family is from, and create a poem, drawing or mini-song about how you feel about your country. (20 minutes)
5. Some suggestions are to describe the beauty of what it looks like, the hardships it has gone through, the victories it's one, or how you feel about your country.

Activity 2: *Name that Genre! Bonus points if you can name that instrument!*

Overview: Kompa has influenced so many other genres over time it has so many blends and hints of different instruments and sounds. Hip Hop creole has developed over time from the influence of American Hip Hop but with the deep connections and roots of Kompa. In this activity students will differentiate which genre of Haitian music is in the Spotify playlist. By doing so students now have the skills to listen carefully to unique sounds and instruments and be able to tell why and what makes this a different genre from the other. Bonus points if students can identify a specific instrument. (Students can learn more about Haitian instruments in the related OER, “Rhythms of the Past: Exploring Early Haitian Music”).

Instructions:

1. Have students break into groups of 3-5. Each group is a team.
2. One student can use their phone or tablet (if provided by the school) to open the Spotify playlist.
3. When the student are on the playlist the first thing to do is click the shuffle logo which looks like this :  By doing so the songs will be mixed up and will be at random.
4. The students will now work together to listen to each song (they can listen to 30-60 seconds of each) and write down what genre they think it is (Kompa or Hip Hop Creole) and the name of the song.
5. When all the teams have their answers, ask one student from each team to bring the paper with their answers up. Whoever's team has the most correct will be named Kings/Queens of the Haitian genres! (Or maybe a free pass to homework).
6. The answers are listed below:

Answer Key:

1. **Nou Paka Ansanm: Hip Hop Creole**
2. **César: Hip Hop Creole**
3. **M Aprann: Hip Hop Creole**
4. **Pinokyo: Hip Hop Creole**
5. **Sa Tris: Hip Hop Creole**
6. **Peyi Gè: Hip Hop Creole**
7. **Traka Pi Red: Hip Hop Creole**
8. **Clueless (with Oxlade): Hip Hop Creole**
9. **Confusion: Kompa**
10. **Comme on rê ve: Kompa**
11. **Pitit deyo: Kompa**
12. **Please baby: Kompa**
13. **Kanpe Devanm: Kompa**
14. **Ma Cherie Je T'aime: Kompa**
15. **Mal: Kompa**

Activity 3: *An adventure into Haitian music*

Overview: In this activity, students will be able to learn more about Haitian music through this hands-on experience. It requires students to go out into their own community and discover the cultural connections between Haitian music and what they have learned. Reading about music is one thing—you can only understand so much. But going out and being a part of a live performance is a whole different experience in itself. When being right in front of Haitian dancers, artists, and musicians, you can feel their words. Their strong, passionate body language and moves. It helps the student understand why these artists do what they do in order to make Haiti proud. As Jean was describing in his song “*Lady Haiti*.:

Instructions:

1. Refer to slides 8-10 or the 3 videos listed afterwards. In these slides it shows examples of Haitian performers that I had experienced and felt a whole different vibe being there.
2. I understood why Haitian artists are so connected with their music and how the instruments make you just want to get up and dance.
3. Students should refer to these slides to check out these authentic performers.
4. Students can refer to slide 10 where there is a link that takes you to Haiti Cultural Exchange, a website that lists events in NYC if you are in New York.
5. Have students get together in groups or they can go on their own to attend a Haitian dance or singer’s performance nearby.
6. Students must write a little summary, describing what it was about? Who performed? What did they perform? How did they feel? Were there any songs or dances about Haitian history?
7. Students can go on Google maps, Apple maps, and Google to search “nearby Haitian dance events” “nearby Haitian cultural events”, or “Haitian performances”. In doing so, please make sure students are able to find authentic performances, not parties or clubs which tend to also pop up.
8. When they return the next day, students share their experiences, relate, and discuss how these performances could have been affected by Haitian history.

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