

“Take Me To The River”

Teacher’s Guide



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Welcome!

"Take Me To The River"

Teacher's Instructional Planning Companion
Berklee College of Music

Dear Teachers:

It has been a pleasure collaborating with Krystal Banfield, Dean for Berklee City Music®, to contribute to the development of learning activities associated with the film. In the process of creating the materials, I was influenced by my own experiences as a music teacher as well as my perspective as the music supervisor for the public schools system in Memphis, Tennessee.

The following materials are designed to provide teachers with resources to engage students in curricular activities that inspire creativity and collaboration:

- A brief historical survey regarding the music of Memphis, Tennessee, highlighting the American Soul Music cultivated at Stax Records.
- Two Instructional Activities designed to introduce students to excerpts of the film focus attention on the concepts of gaining understanding through cultural and generational collaboration.
- A matrix to provide students with an opportunity for extended learning opportunities. Please note that some activities are designed to be semester long assignments so they may appear to be repeated.
- A template for teachers to use for organizing Student Learning Objectives (SLO) and capturing evidence of student growth. This is a tool for ongoing use.
- Thank you for your commitment to engaging all students in meaningful opportunities that help them develop as lifelong musicians and achieve success for college, career, and life readiness.

Dru Davison, Ph.D.
Fine Arts Advisor for Shelby County Schools, Memphis, TN.

Take Me To The River - Introduction and History

A Brief History of Stax

Movie Clip #1 - Take Me To The River Movie Opening

Watch the opening of the movie "Take Me To The River," narrated by Terrence Howard. (Opening - 8:47.)

Movie Clip #2 - Sharing Music and Knowledge Between Generations

Watch Lester Snell, Bobby Rush and Frayser Boy as they collaborate on the classic Rufus Thomas tune "Push and Pull." (15:05 – 20:56)

Background and History



The Home of the Blues, Birthplace of Rock and Roll, and the Heart of American Soul Music.

There are certain places that bring up unmistakable images and sounds upon first consideration. Memphis has long been associated with important aspects of commerce, culture, and social issues. While many may have initial thoughts of Memphis centering on slow-cooked barbeque, others will immediately recognize the city's contributions to

American popular music ranging from the origins of the Delta Blues to the development of Rock and Roll.

In the mid-twentieth century, Beale Street was the place for aspiring musicians to be. The talents of artists such as W.C. Handy, B.B. King, and Muddy Waters were nurtured there. Later, Memphis helped shape rock n roll with the emergence of Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Johnny Cash, who recorded at Sun Studio. In 1957, a man named Jim Stewart begins recording country music in a garage and Satellite Records is launched. Soon after, Stewart's sister Estelle Axton mortgaged her home to pay for recording equipment, and by 1959 Stewart and Axton moved to a new location, an old theatre in south Memphis, later to be an area known as "Soulsville". After some commercial success, Stewart takes the first two letters from his last name (ST) and adds the first two letters of his sister's last name (AX) to form the new label name - STAX RECORDS. Stax Records would go on to launch the careers of such legendary artists as Otis Redding, Isaac Hayes, Johnny Taylor, Sam and Dave, Rufus and Carla Thomas, Booker T and the MGs, and numerous others. In 1967, its biggest star, Otis Redding, as well as most of the R&B group, the Bar-Kays, were tragically killed in a plane crash. Soon after this, while in Memphis to support striking African American sanitation workers, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated at the Lorraine Motel just a few miles away from Stax Records. During the mid-1970's, the record label suffered a number of financial issues and closed.

The story of Stax Records however, is more than just that of an innovative record company in the United States. Stax was one of the most successfully integrated companies in the country - from top management and administration to its artists. With more than 200 employees, it was the fifth-largest African-American owned business in the United States during its time. Being a racially integrated company of musicians, producers, writers, and engineers, Stax represented a glimpse of what society could be if collaboration and respect were the norm. Now a functioning museum and student music academy, the legacy and ideals that generated an unmistakable sound still resonates for all to experience.

Instructional Activity "A"

Gaining Understanding Through Cultural and Generational Collaboration

National Standards for Music Education (1992):

- 1.0 Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music
- 2.0 Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music
- 6.0 Listening to, analyzing, and describing music
- 9.0 Understanding music in relation to history and culture

Core Arts Standards (2014):

- MU:Cn11.0.8a- Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life

Danielson Framework Indicators:

- 3b Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques
- 3c Engaging Students in Learning
- 3d Using Assessment in Instruction

Target Grades: Middle/High School

Enduring Understanding:

- Response to music is informed by analyzing context (social, cultural, and historical)

Essential Questions:

- How does understanding the structure and context of music inform a response?
- How do musicians generate creative ideas?
- How do musicians make creative decisions?

Materials:

- Watch *Take Me To The River* movie excerpts "Ain't No Sunshine" Bobby 'Blue' Bland (1:06:56 – 1:16:48) and William Bell (1:25:00 – 1:31:46)
- Music instruments

Introduction

Often times, populations and/or sub-populations of people, along with specific generations are associated with particular music genres or sub-genres. As was demonstrated by the intergenerational collaborations in the film *Take Me To The River*, each style of music can blend to influence the creation of something new.

- Watch Bobby 'Blue' Bland and Yo Gotti collaborate on the Bill Withers classic "Ain't No Sunshine" (1:06:56 – 1:16:48.)
- Watch William Bell, Snoop Dogg and the Stax Music Academy collaborate on "I Forgot To Be Your Lover" (1:25:00 – 1:31:46.)

Project 1 - Essay

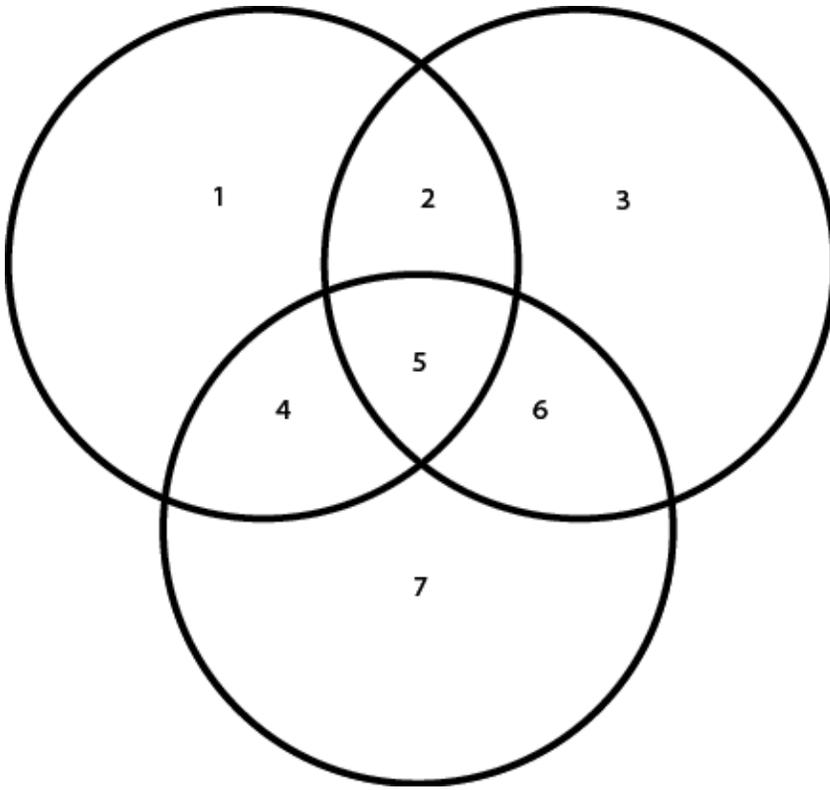
- Write a compare and contrast essay that compares music of today and the past. Explain the changes in music recording and studio equipment that defines modern music against music from previous generations.

Project 2 - Open Ended

- Students (in small groups) collaborate to remake a given (or chosen) contemporary song, which has all the major elements of the original, to include elements that they feel would be present given the mentoring of a master musician from a previous generation. The students would describe, through class presentation, how the song might change and reflect on the processes used.

Project 3 - Open Ended

Students are asked to take a tri-fold poster board, and draw a three way Venn diagram on it. They then would proceed to place different cultural groups in each circle, along with a genre of music generally associated with that culture.



1. Culture/Genre 1
2. Mix of Culture/Genre 1 and 2
3. Culture/Genre 2
4. Mix of Culture/Genre 1 and 3
5. Mix of all three Cultures/Genres
6. Mix of Culture/Genre 2 and 3
7. Culture/Genre 3

Instructional Activity "B"

"Wish I Had Answered" from Take Me To The River

Standards

National Standards for Music Education (1992):

- Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music
- Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

Core Arts Standards (2014):

- MU:Cr3.1.8b Describe the rationale for refining works by explaining the choices, based on evaluation criteria
- MU: Pr6.1.8a Perform the music with technical accuracy, stylistic expression, and culturally authentic practices in music to convey the creator's intent

Danielson Framework Indicators:

- 3b Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques
- 3c Engaging Students in Learning

Suggested Grades:

- Grades 6 through 12

Overview:

- This piece was originally released by the Staple Singers in 1968 for Epic Records and was led by Mavis and "Pops" Staples who were Rhythm and Blues and Gospel icons, and Rock and Roll Hall of Famers as well. This arrangement is an example of the rich cultural and artistic history and expressions of Memphis, TN.

Guiding Questions:

- When is a performance judged ready to present?
- How do context and the manner in which the musical work is presented influence audience response?

Materials:

- Movie excerpt: *Take Me To the River* Mavis Staples (39:07 – 47:09.)
- Computer with projector and screen or tablets, white board
- Instrumental and vocal parts “Wish I Had Answered” vocal arrangement.
- Instruments: Keyboard/Piano, Guitar, Drums, Electric Bass, Vocalists

Introduction

In *Take Me To The River*, Grammy award winning artist Mavis Staples reflects on the history of the song “Wish I Had Answered.” Listen and watch carefully for the musical collaboration that ensues in the more contemporary version of this song. Then sing and experience the song with your students.

- Watch Mavis Staples with the North Mississippi All-Stars collaborate on this classic song by Roebuck 'Pops' Staples (39:07 – 47:09.)

Instruction

- After establishing tonality and tempo, the teacher or director will instruct students to sight-read the music (lead vocal melody) using audiation only, accompanied only by a steady beat in duple meter (Half note = 89). Following this, teacher will review rhythms and melodic intervals pervasive in the song. Next, Students will sing the lead vocal part in unison, repeating until the ensemble has consensus in pitch and rhythm. Following this, the SAT/SATB sections are rehearsed following the same procedure, and then rehearsed with instruments, lead vocals, and SAT/SATB combined.

Activity Follow Up:

- Students will prepare and rehearse this work to perform for a concert or event. Follow up activities also include written assignments for students to evaluate student performance of piece, how learning this piece improved their playing ability and what they learned to do that was new or different, and have them give an explanation about the influence of Gospel music in music they hear today from previous topics of discussion while learning this piece.

Extended Learning Matrix

Note: Blocks marked with an asterisk tie to the full-year product-driven project designed to be a project management exercise via live or studio recorded student groups, digital audio or NoteFlight™ (www.noteflight.com) software.

Students and teachers are encouraged to view the movie clips (listed above) and soundtrack to *Take Me To The River* when considering your creative ideas for the extended learning matrix.

Learning Component 1: Extended reading assignments that connect with specified curriculum			
Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
<p>*Make connections between the music and sources of literature. This can be through several different means of exploration (i.e. deep analysis of lyrics, playing music based off of literary works and making connections between the two, or creating lyrics and/ or a story based off students' performance literature). Suggested resource: www.pbs.org/theblues/classroom/int soul.html</p>	<p>*Make connections between the music and sources of literature. This can be through several different means of exploration (i.e. deep analysis of lyrics, playing music based off of literary works and making connections between the two, or creating lyrics and/ or a story based off students' performance literature).</p>	<p>*Compile three online professional articles that pertain to pedagogy for the student's main instrument/voice. Create a journal documenting "best practices" of all resources through personal practice, listening to the recorded songs, observing the video and inquiring with peers and teachers who play instruments/sing.</p>	<p>*Research Internet and/or periodical articles that give information on the struggles musicians face in sustaining careers in the music industry. How do their experiences inform your career choices? Provide evidence of how suggested solutions can be implemented. Develop artistic or professional disciplinary statement or career plan. (History of Women in Soul Music: A Workshop with Michelle Obama – www.pbs.org)</p>

Learning Component 2: Projects that apply course curriculum to relevant or real-world situations.			
Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
*Students identify life events for which music can be used for a practical purpose, and determine if their original composition could be used for such an event.	* Students use NoteFlight™ (www.noteflight.com) to sketch their original compositions in terms of form, lyrics, melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic elements.	*Finalize arrangements for a public performance of the original composition. (i.e., chamber recital, concert, video/single release event)	*Finalize composition/video and perform/conduct/release the original composition.
Learning Component 3: Deeper exploration of the culture, values, and history of the discipline "Take Me To The River" William Bell			
Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Students will compare and contrast the differences in music for athletic events and how these differences are observed by the public. How does selection enjoyment change depending on the environment?	Students will research how composition techniques have changed over the past 300 years. What techniques have evolved and how has orchestration changed to create certain effects?	Students will research how music can play a pivotal role in film. How does it enhance or detract from the production? How has this evolved from the days of silent film?	Students will research how the role of music changes for different events. (i.e. music for theater, athletic events, music for a ceremony)
Learning Component 4: Writing assignments that demonstrate a variety of modes, purposes, and styles, including research			
Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
*Students will write an essay describing the various sources that composers use for inspiration and creativity.	*Students will write an essay describing the various sources that composers use for inspiration and creativity.	Students will create promotional print and media materials for the performance, and provide a printed program containing program notes and acknowledgments.	*Students will write a press release for the performance of their original composition.

Learning Component 5: Integration of appropriate technology into the course of study

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Use various technologies (Garage Band, metronomes, tuners) to refine technique and build an overall sense of musical independence.	*Use Garage Band or NoteFlight™ (www.noteflight.com) to facilitate original composition.	Use Garage Band or NoteFlight™ to facilitate original composition.	*Students will use a digital recording device to record performances and transfer the files to an audio CD or publish via the Internet.

Learning Component 6: Open-ended investigations in which the student selects the questions and designs the research

Quarter 1	Quarter 1	Quarter 1	Quarter 1
*Students will investigate, compare and contrast various modes for composing and arranging traditional, non-traditional, popular music, spoken word, and decipher appropriate solutions for facilitating the composition.	*Students will investigate, compare and contrast various modes for composing and arranging traditional, non-traditional, popular music, spoken word, and decipher appropriate solutions for facilitating the composition.	*Students will investigate, compare and contrast various modes for composing and arranging traditional, non-traditional, popular music, spoken word, and decipher appropriate solutions for facilitating the composition.	*Students will investigate, compare and contrast various modes for composing and arranging traditional, non-traditional, popular music, spoken word, and decipher appropriate solutions for facilitating the composition.

Learning Component 7: Extensive opportunities for problem-solving experiences through imagination, critical analysis, and appreciation

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Students will collaborate to put together their own approved concert and/or spoken word performance and attend an approved recital or concert or spoken word performance and write an analytical critique with	Students will collaborate to put together their own approved concert and/or spoken word performance and attend an approved recital or concert or	Students will attend an approved recital or concert and write an analytical critique with	Students will attend an approved recital or concert and write an analytical critique with

specific comparative references to music literature the student has previously studied.	spoken word performance and write an analytical critique with specific comparative references to music literature the student has previously studied.	specific comparative references to music literature the student has previously studied.	specific comparative references to music literature the student has previously studied.
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Student Learning Objectives (SLO Template)

Grade Level/ Course	
Objective(s) What will students know and be able to do at the end of the instruction in relation to the selected portfolio domain? <i>Learning objectives are:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Best stated in student friendly language</i> • <i>Measurable (states what the student will know and be able to do by the end of the instruction.)</i> • <i>Should be communicated within the context of the standard(s).</i> • <i>May include overarching and long-term goals.</i> 	
Artistic Domain (Perform, Create, Respond, and/or Connect) <i>Include a justification for why the domain(s) is selected based on the relationship to the standards.</i>	
Student Evidence (Point A) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When is the assessment taking place? • What criteria are being used to measure the objectives before and during instruction? • How does the data collected from the pre-assessment correspond to the scoring guide? 	
Student Evidence (Point B) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When is the assessment taking place? • What criteria are being used to measure the objectives following instruction? 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does the data collected from the post-assessment correspond to the scoring guide?• Will there be additional evidence between point A and B?• Is the relationship between Point A and B clear?	
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Berklee City Music

Berklee City Music® is a nonprofit program that provides music education to 4th thru 12th graders in under-served communities.

Berklee City Music Network

The Berklee City Music Network® is a consortium of 49 community organizations across the United States and Canada committed to delivering high-quality contemporary music instruction to youth in underserved communities. Network sites are like-minded music programs that align with the mission of Berklee City Music.

PULSE

The Berklee PULSE® Music Method is a collection of online lessons, access to professionally trained instructors and materials that support classroom instruction. PULSE (Pre University Learning System Experience) is offered to students who are part of the Berklee City Music Network or Amp Up NYC® initiative. PULSE focuses on musical styles that originate in American popular culture and emphasizes the study of instrumental technique, theoretical understanding and an awareness of historical context.

Berklee College of Music

Berklee College of Music was founded on the revolutionary principle that the best way to prepare students for careers in music is through the study and practice of contemporary music. For more than 65 years, the college has evolved to reflect the current state of the music industry, leading the way with baccalaureate studies in performance, music business/management, songwriting, music therapy, film scoring, and more. With a focus on global learning, Berklee in Valencia, a new campus in Spain, is hosting the college's first graduate programs, while Berklee Online serves distance learners worldwide with extension classes and degree-granting programs. The Berklee City Music Network provides after-school programming for underserved teens in 49 locations throughout the U.S. and Canada. With a student body representing nearly 100 countries and alumni and faculty that have won more than 300 Grammy and Latin Grammy Awards, Berklee is the world's premier learning lab for the music of today—and tomorrow.

Learn more at www.berklee.edu/city-music