



# **The life of Jazz!**

An elementary general music curriculum unit exploring the early development of jazz music through listening, movement, and singing

University of Miami MED 642 Curriculum Project

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## **Overview & Rationale:**

### *Context & Inspiration*

The creation of this curricular unit has been inspired by and is dedicated to my 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students at Sweetwater Elementary School and the three-lesson unit on Blues Music co-created and taught to them by myself and Andrew Peterson. This unit, entitled “The Life of Jazz!” is a four-lesson unit for 5<sup>th</sup> grade general music which aims to educate students about the early history of jazz from the polyrhythms of Africa, Cuba, and Latin America to the popular music of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. It is designed and sequenced with the assumption that students meet for an hour once a week and have prior knowledge of keyboard skills, major scales, basic major/minor chords on accompanying instruments, solfege syllables *do*, *mi*, *sol*, *la*, and practice on Orff instruments. Effective engagement with the materials in this unit will ensure that students develop a more advanced understanding of rhythm, the characteristics of Blues music, and the 12-bar Blues progression, as well as skills in improvising using simple tonal patterns.

I wanted to create a curricular unit that had sentimental value to me as a musician. When considering musical genres and concepts that I thought to be characteristically “me,” I decided to return to the root of what made me fall in love with music in the first place: jazz! This unit could have gone in multiple directions, but despite the range of possibilities I chose to use the inception of jazz in America and reference its historical sequence as a framework for the lesson sequence. With that strategy, students not only engage with the musical *concepts* of jazz, but they also have a chance to discover the historical connections between jazz and other cultures. The main purpose of this unit is for students to explore more complex rhythmic skills as well as introductory improvisation techniques in the context of early jazz, each of which are dependent upon learning the basics of polyrhythmic music, polyphony, the Blues, and improvisation. These four jazz concepts provide the foundation for the four lessons in this curriculum unit.

Each lesson in this unit begins with a review of material established in the lesson(s) prior. Lesson structures are largely inspired by the teaching approach of Émile Jacques-Dalcroze which emphasizes developing the mind and body together and using them to express creativity. These lessons focus on movement as a means of learning rhythms, and they focus on singing, listening, and playing as forms of developing the ear. Teaching approaches are also partially inspired by Orff-Schulwerk pedagogy (primarily in lesson four) and Kodály pedagogy (primarily in lesson three) which contribute to the students’ ability to sing, move, and listen to music within the context of jazz. The resources I rely on to make this unit possible include common accompanying instruments, Orff instruments, YouTube videos, and GarageBand, all of which I believe provide students with a guided, accessible experience for engaging with early jazz concepts.

### *Philosophy*

Part of my fascination with jazz comes from its humanistic roots; the foundation of its performance comes from deep, shared human struggles, and to learn to embody one’s feelings in performance is at the core of what it means to be an artist. Jazz is a “living” music, ever-changing as is the climate of society, and contextualizing music historically and culturally allows for students to personalize their relationship with it. In lesson three of this



unit, I provide students with an opportunity to artistically illustrate their feelings in relation to the societal context of the Blues music they are learning, and it is my hope that students will use this as a chance to begin connecting with the music on an emotional level, now and forever, as they learn to let it fill the gaps where they are unable to characterize life's experiences. As Danish author Hans Christian Andersen once said, *where words fail, music speaks*.

The unit objectives for “The Life of Jazz!” coincide with and enforce a number of Florida State Music Education Standards for 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Detailed below are the learning objectives for the unit, the State Standards addressed, as well as a scope and sequence for student learning.

### **Unit Objectives:**

- Students will be able to understand and perform body percussion polyrhythms as a class and as groups.
- Students will understand the historical background and significance of early jazz music.
- Students will be able to create polyrhythms and polyphonic compositions using loops and instruments in GarageBand.
- Students will be able to describe the traditional role of each of the instruments in the New Orleans polyphony.
- Students will be able to describe 2-3 characteristics of the Blues in their own words (lyrical themes, form, instrumentation, chord progression, historical connection).
- Students will be able to perform the basic 12-bar Blues chord progression on keyboard, guitar, and Orff instruments.
- Students will be able to sing on solfege, using solfege hand signs, the root of each chord of the 12-bar Blues progression.
- Students will be able to improvise over polyrhythmic ostinati and the 12-bar Blues progression using the tonic major pentatonic scale.

### **FL State Music Standards:**

- **MU.5.F.1.1** Create a performance using (visual, kinesthetic, acoustic, and/or) digital means manipulate musical elements.
- **MU.5.O.1** Understanding the organizational structure of an art form provides a foundation for appreciation of artistic works and respect for the creative process.
- **MU.5.O.1.1** Analyze, using correct musical vocabulary, the use of musical elements in various styles of music as a foundation for understanding the creative process.
- **MU.5.H.1.1** Identify the purposes for which music is used in various cultures.
- **MU.5.S.1.1** Improvise rhythmic and melodic phrases to create simple variations on familiar melodies.
- **MU.5.S.1.2** Compose short vocal or instrumental pieces using a variety of sound sources.

At the end of this unit, there is a cumulative project where students incorporate skills and concepts from all four lessons into a final performance entitled the “jazz performance project.” This project provides students with the opportunity to continue to collaborate, explore, and connect with the concepts of early jazz history in creative ways.

### Scope & Sequence:

CONCEPTS	LESSON 1: <i>The Rhythms That Created Jazz</i>	LESSON 2: <i>The Sounds of New Orleans</i>	LESSON 3: <i>Introduction to the Blues</i>	LESSON 4: <i>Let's Improvise!</i>
Styles/Genres	Afro-Cuban Polyrhythmic Music	New Orleans Polyphony	Blues	Blues, Polyrhythmic Music
Rhythm	Movement, Body Percussion	N/A	Movement & Dance	Movement, Body Percussion, Improvisation
Form/Structure	Polyrhythms	Polyphony	Traditional Blues Form	N/A
Harmony	N/A	Polyphony	12-bar Blues Progression I - IV - V	12-bar Blues Progression I - IV - V
Singing	N/A	N/A	Solfege: <i>do, fa, sol</i>	N/A
Instruments	Digital, MIDI	Digital, MIDI	Keyboard, Guitar	Keyboard, Orff Instruments
Timbre	Digital MIDI, Cultural Percussion	Digital MIDI, Poly- phony, Percussion	Blues band, Rock band	Orff Instruments, Keyboard MIDI, Blues

## “The Life of Jazz” Lesson #1

Lesson Title The Rhythms That Created Jazz		Grade Level: 5 <sup>th</sup> grade					
Goal (what's the BIG IDEA? Where is this one lesson going?)  Students will be able to understand and perform body percussion polyrhythms as a class and as groups. Additionally, they will be able to create polyrhythms using loops in GarageBand.							
Learning Objectives & FL K-5 Music Learning Standard Addressed  1.) MU.5.F.1.1 Create a performance using (visual, kinesthetic, acoustic, and/or) digital means manipulate musical elements.  Objective: SWBAT compose their own polyphony using instrumental loops and MIDI in GarageBand.							
Areas of Music Experience		Music Concept Focus		Materials & Room Set Up			
<input type="checkbox"/> performing music, singing <input type="checkbox"/> performing music, playing <input type="checkbox"/> creating music, improv <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> creating music, composing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> listening to music <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moving to music <input type="checkbox"/> analyzing music <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> connecting music to history/culture		<input type="checkbox"/> beat/pulse <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> rhythm <input type="checkbox"/> meter <input type="checkbox"/> accent <input type="checkbox"/> tempo <input type="checkbox"/> form <input type="checkbox"/> texture <input type="checkbox"/> timbre		<input type="checkbox"/> pitch <input type="checkbox"/> melody <input type="checkbox"/> harmony <input type="checkbox"/> dynamics <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> style/genr <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		• Standard Classroom Setup • Prepared PowerPoint  • African Polyrhythms video • Cuban Habanero Rhythm video • Afro-Cuban Polyrhythms video • Lincoln Center Baião rhythm video	
Procedures to Support Learning (each lesson segment should include an (1) Opening, (2) Presentation, (3) Application and Assessment, and (4) Conclusion. A complete 45-60 minute might include 2-3 lesson segments, though project-based lessons may require an entire lesson devoted to one primary task).							
PREPARE: Preparing students for learning Afro-Cuban polyrhythms.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepare students for performing polyrhythms by utilizing video examples and modeling independent body percussion rhythms for students to imitate.</li><li>• Preparing students for composing polyrhythmic pieces by performing body percussion polyrhythms. It is assumed that students are proficient in the basics of GarageBand use from prior lessons.</li></ul>							
PRESENT & PRACTICE: Practice for learning Afro-Cuban polyrhythms.							
INTRO (10 minutes)  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teacher will introduce jazz history with prepared PowerPoint briefly detailing its origins. Discussion for this lesson is primarily focused on polyrhythms of Africa, Cuba, and Latin America. Teacher will show maps depicting where these places are and how/why music moved from place to place.</li><li>• Teacher will play each of the videos and talk briefly about what students are seeing and hearing – what exactly are polyrhythms?</li><li>• Teacher will ask students if they recognize any of the instruments they hear or see. Not the primary focus of the lesson, but Teacher may introduce a few key instruments such as the claves. Connect to students’ cultures – is anyone familiar with this music?</li></ul>							
PRACTICE (10 minutes)  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Polyrhythm activity! Teacher will model independent parts of what will become a class-performed polyrhythm using body percussion: clapped rhythm. (clave), snaps, chest thump (bass), stomps, slide hands together, etc. Students will imitate each of these.</li><li>• Teacher will put the polyrhythm together part by part. First, class will be split in two parts, bass and clave. Then, three, then four, five...until all parts of the polyrhythm are accounted for.</li><li>• Class will perform polyrhythm!</li></ul>							

**APPLY pt. 1 (20 minutes)**

- Teacher will assign students into groups of 4 or 5. The activity for each group is to come up with and perform their own body percussion polyrhythms, where each student is performing an independent piece of the puzzle. They may use the body percussion provided in the previous activity, or they may create their own! Groups will have 10 minutes.
- Each group will perform their polyrhythm for the class. Teacher will open up space for quick comments or questions, and then Teacher will provide feedback.

**APPLY pt. 2 (20 minutes)**

- Teacher will hand out laptops or iPads with headphones to each student to start the following GarageBand project. It is assumed that students have used GarageBand previously and understand the basic layout and function of the tools inside.
- Students will use the percussion loops within to create their own digital polyrhythms – at least five independent parts, one of which must be the clave rhythm.

**Vocabulary Words:** polyrhythm

**Assessment Techniques**

Formative	Summative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are students able to accurately perform two-, three-, four-, and five-part body percussion polyrhythms? If not, teacher may wind it back to review individual parts or perform less parts at one time before building back up to the full polyrhythm.</li> <li>• Are students able to effectively find and use loops in GarageBand to create polyrhythms with at least five parts? If not, then teacher may review GarageBand practices and how to find and use loops.</li> </ul>	<p>Students who understand the material will be able to correctly perform individual body percussion parts within the context of a more complex polyrhythms. Additionally, they will be able to effectively organize and perform their own group's polyrhythm using different body percussion as well as create polyrhythms digitally.</p>

**Accommodations/Differentiation**

Students who are unable to use computer software may create their own polyrhythm with the teacher using a loop pedal available in the classroom and either handheld percussion, body percussion, or objects found around the classroom such as pencils and chairs. Additionally, students who are physically unable to perform certain body percussion movements are invited to perform an alternative movement that produces a similar sound (example: stomping replaced with pounding their fist on a table).

**Extension** (where will you go next?)

Class will use polyrhythms composition to build a larger piece of polyphony in conjunction with the lessons on New Orleans polyphony (Jazz lesson 2).

Eisengrein 2022

Links:

- African polyrhythms [video](#)
- Cuban *Habanero* rhythm [video](#)
- Afro-Cuban polyrhythms [video](#)
- Lincoln Center *Baião* [video](#)

## “The Life of Jazz” Lesson #2

<b>Lesson Title</b> <i>The Sounds of New Orleans</i>		<b>Grade Level:</b> 5 <sup>th</sup> grade
<b>Goal</b> ( <i>what’s the BIG IDEA? Where is this one lesson going?</i> )  Students will be able to use GarageBand to create a New Orleans-style polyphony using trumpet, trombone, tuba, clarinet, and their previously created polyrhythmic composition. Additionally, they will be able to characterize each instrument’s traditional role in the New Orleans polyphony.		
<b>Learning Objectives &amp; FL K-5 Music Learning Standard Addressed</b>  2.) <b>MU.5.F.1.1</b> Create a performance using (visual, kinesthetic, acoustic, and/or) digital means manipulate musical elements.  <i>Objective:</i> SWBAT compose their own polyphony using instrumental loops and MIDI in GarageBand.		
<b>Areas of Music Experience</b> <input type="checkbox"/> performing music, singing <input type="checkbox"/> performing music, playing <input type="checkbox"/> creating music, improv <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> creating music, composing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> listening to music <input type="checkbox"/> moving to music <input type="checkbox"/> analyzing music <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> connecting music to history/culture	<b>Music Concept Focus</b> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> beat/pulse  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> rhythm  <input type="checkbox"/> meter  <input type="checkbox"/> accent  <input type="checkbox"/> tempo  <input type="checkbox"/> form  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> texture  <input type="checkbox"/> timbre         </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> pitch  <input type="checkbox"/> melody  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> harmony  <input type="checkbox"/> dynamics  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> style/genre  <input type="checkbox"/> _____  <input type="checkbox"/> _____  <input type="checkbox"/> _____         </div>	<b>Materials &amp; Room Set Up</b> <div> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standard Classroom Setup  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prepared PowerPoint         </div> <div> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NOLA Band video  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trombone Shorty video         </div>
<b>Procedures to Support Learning</b> (each lesson segment should include an (1) Opening, (2) Presentation, (3) Application and Assessment, and (4) Conclusion. A complete 45-60 minute might include 2-3 lesson segments, though project-based lessons may require an entire lesson devoted to one primary task).  <b>PREPARE:</b> Preparing students for learning about New Orleans polyphony.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare students for composing a New Orleans polyphony-style piece by learning about the instruments of the polyphony and their roles in the band.</li> <li>• Connect to the previous lesson on Afro-Cuban polyrhythms to prepare students for understanding the purpose of multiple instruments within a New Orleans style polyphony.</li> </ul> <b>PRESENT &amp; PRACTICE:</b> Practice for learning about New Orleans polyphony.  <div style="text-align: center;"><b>INTRO (10 minutes)</b></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher will introduce Jazz History segment #2 with a review of Afro-Cuban polyrhythms from the week prior.</li> <li>• Teacher will continue history lesson with prepared PowerPoint briefly detailing the migration of polyrhythmic to the United States in New Orleans. Teacher will show maps again from previous lesson as well as map of New Orleans.</li> <li>• Teacher introduces New Orleans polyphony through videos and prompt discussion: what do students hear? What do they see? What instruments are used?</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center;"><b>PRACTICE (5-10 minutes)</b></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is assumed at this stage in children’s music experience that they know and recognize instruments like trumpets, trombones, sometimes clarinets, tubas, and percussion. Teacher will ask: what do students know about these instruments? What are their roles in the NOLA polyphony?</li> <li>• Show and tell! Teacher will bring some of the instruments (any they own – trumpet, trombone) for students to see and hold.</li> </ul>		

- Teacher will conclude PowerPoint with video of favorite artist: Trombone Shorty *Hurricane Season* live performance in New Orleans polyphony style.

**APPLY (40 minutes)**

- Students will revisit their Afro-Cuban polyrhythmic composition from the prior lesson. Their new assignment is to use GarageBand loops and MIDI for instruments of the polyphony and expand their composition to fit the New Orleans style. Students will have 25-30 minutes to continue their composition. At the end of the lesson, students will share their compositions with each other in groups or as a class. The teacher will ask questions regarding why students chose to have certain instruments play certain sounds, and students will use learned knowledge about the roles of the instruments in the New Orleans polyphony to defend their choices.

**Vocabulary Words:** polyphony

**Assessment Techniques**

Formative	Summative
Are students able to use the correct instruments in their composition of polyphony? If not, teacher may wind back to review the parts of the NOLA polyphony.	Students who understand the material will be able to expand their prior polyrhythmic composition to include instruments of the New Orleans polyphony.

**Extension** (where will you go next?)

Students will progress their knowledge of the history of jazz to begin learning about the next big step in its development within the USA: the blues! Students will use listening skills learned in analyzing Afro-Cuban and New Orleans-style rhythms to learn the chord progression of the 12-bar blues.

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Links:

- New Orleans street band [video](#)
- Trombone Shorty [video](#)



### “The Life of Jazz” Lesson #3

<b>Lesson Title</b> Jazz History Lesson 3: Introduction to the Blues!		<b>Grade Level:</b> 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade
<b>Goal</b> ( <i>what's the BIG IDEA? Where is this one lesson going?</i> )  Students will be able to understand basic historical development of the blues as well describe characteristics of blues songs and play a 12-bar blues progression on keyboard and guitar.		
<b>Learning Objectives &amp; FL K-5 Music Learning Standard Addressed</b>  1.) <b>MU.5.O.1:</b> Understanding the organizational structure of an art form provides a foundation for appreciation of artistic works and respect for the creative process.  <i>Objective:</i> Students will be able to sing and perform on instruments the chord progression of the 12-bar blues  2.) <b>MU.5.O.1.1:</b> Analyze, using correct musical vocabulary, the use of musical elements in various styles of music as a foundation for understanding the creative process.  3.) <b>MU.5.H.1.1</b> Identify the purposes for which music is used in various cultures.  <i>Objective:</i> Students will be able to describe 2-3 characteristics of the blues in their own words (lyrical themes, forms, instrumentation, chord progression, etc.).  <i>Objective:</i> Students will be able to understand the historical significance of the Blues.		
<b>Areas of Music Experience</b> <input type="checkbox"/> performing music, singing <input type="checkbox"/> performing music, playing <input type="checkbox"/> creating music, improv <input type="checkbox"/> creating music, composing <input type="checkbox"/> listening to music <input type="checkbox"/> moving to music <input type="checkbox"/> analyzing music <input type="checkbox"/> connecting music to history/culture	<b>Music Concept Focus</b> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> beat/pulse  <input type="checkbox"/> rhythm  <input type="checkbox"/> meter  <input type="checkbox"/> accent  <input type="checkbox"/> tempo  <input type="checkbox"/> form  <input type="checkbox"/> texture  <input type="checkbox"/> timbre         </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> pitch  <input type="checkbox"/> melody  <input type="checkbox"/> harmony  <input type="checkbox"/> dynamics  <input type="checkbox"/> style/genre  <input type="checkbox"/> _____  <input type="checkbox"/> _____  <input type="checkbox"/> _____         </div>	<b>Materials &amp; Room Set Up</b> <div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standard Classroom Setup</li> <li>• Prepared PowerPoint</li> <li>• YouTube Video of <i>Sweet Home Chicago</i></li> <li>• Sheets of Paper, Pencils, Colored Pencils/Crayons</li> </ul> </div> <div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keyboards (present in classroom)</li> <li>• Acoustic Guitars (present in classroom)</li> </ul> </div>
<b>Procedures to Support Learning</b> (each lesson segment should include an (1) Opening, (2) Presentation, (3) Application and Assessment, and (4) Conclusion. A complete 45-60 minute might include 2-3 lesson segments, though project-based lessons may require an entire lesson devoted to one primary task).  <b>PREPARE:</b> Preparing students for Learning the 12-bar Blues Form and Chord Progression: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare students for connecting the Blues music to history by contextualizing it as music of the end of slavery. Prompt brief student discussion: what do students know about slavery? How and why was Blues music created at the end of this era? What were people singing about?</li> <li>• Prepare students to recognize the <i>form</i> of the song by having them listen to and watch the YouTube video and ask them if they hear any repeated patterns, words, or phrases. What comes back and what does not?</li> <li>• Prepare to connect the blues to other blues songs by asking students what instruments they think they heard from listening, and which instruments they saw by watching? What is the vocalist singing about? Students will later find out that these instruments and themes are common to most traditional blues songs!</li> <li>• Prepare students to sing the root of each chord in the 12-bar blues <i>progression</i> by reviewing solfege and hand signs for “do,” “mi,” “sol,” and “fa.” Students will follow a lead sheet and traditional Western notation to sing the roots of the chords.</li> <li>• Prepare students to play the 12-bar blues chord progression by singing the root of each chord of the 12-bar blues progression on solfege (using hand signs) while following a lead sheet and traditional Western</li> </ul>		

notation. Additionally, students will be prepared to play by reviewing the chords E Major, A Major, and B Major.

**PRESENT & PRACTICE:** Practice for Learning the 12-bar Blues Form and Chord Progression:

**INTRO (10 minutes)**

- Teacher will play for students the YouTube video of *Sweet Home Chicago* by Freddie King and ask them to listen for anything they hear which is repeated. Additionally, the teacher will ask students to describe in musical terms what they saw and heard (instruments, rhythms, etc. – similar or unsimilar to New Orleans style polyphony?). Are they familiar with the blues? What do they know/what have they heard?
- Teacher will provoke discussion to gear the conversation towards talking about the instruments seen, the theme being sung about, and the sections of the song. Teacher will reveal to students that these themes are common amongst most, if not all, 12-bar blues, as well as what students can listen for to know when the song is in a new section.
- Teacher will also discuss with students the common themes about the blues. Prompt: *think about a time where you struggled with something. How did that make you feel? What did you do to express yourself? Did you talk about it, sing, dance, sleep? In the blues, people traditionally sang about their common struggles.*
- Teacher will briefly contextualize *why* people traditionally sang about such topics: talk about slavery, slave songs (sung to capture human struggle as well as keep themselves entertained during the long days), emancipation proclamation, people leaving the south for better lives. Spread the blues throughout the country; people still sang about the human condition!
- Teacher will again prompt students towards listening for harmonic patterns; plays the video again and *tell me what you hear.*
- Teacher will introduce the three-chord pattern of 12-bar blues.

**PRACTICE (10 minutes)**

- Teacher will introduce traditional notation of blues progression. Using their knowledge and prior practice of solfege of solfege syllables, students will sing along to the song by singing the root of each chord and following the notation. Notes they will sing: E, A, B. (before having students sing, teacher will model each as they go with the notation, and students will echo).
- Once students are able to sing through the progression “acapella,” the Teacher will replay the video for students to sing along to.
- Teacher will invite students to come up with a body movement during sections where the vocalist is not singing (intro, solo section) – playing air instruments or dancing!

**APPLY (20 minutes)**

- Students will apply their new knowledge of the 12-bar blues progression to the keyboard and guitar. Half of the class will start on keyboards, the other half on guitars.
- Teacher will begin with guitar students, reviewing with them the E chord, A chord, and B chord. It is assumed at this point that students have learned these chords in prior lessons.
- Teacher will review the same chords with the students on piano. It is assumed that students have learned these chords in prior lessons.
- Students will first play through the 12-bar blues progression to a steady beat while reading notation. Then, once they are able to perform to the beat, they will play along with the progression of the video, beginning at the start of the first chorus (not the intro).
- Once students have played through once, students will switch instruments. Guitar players will go to pianos, and piano players will go to guitars. Then the activity will repeat.

**REFLECT/CONNECT (20 minutes)**

- Teacher will pass out sheets of paper to each student and give them a reflection prompt to work on until the end of class. This reflection prompt aims to connect student learning about the historical context and significance of the blues with their own experiences.

- Students will work independently on reflection prompt: write or draw about a time you struggled with something in your life. How did it make you feel? What did you do with your feelings? Sheets will be turned into Teacher at the end of class.

**Vocabulary Words:** form, intro, verse, chorus, 12-bar blues, (chord) progression, harmony

#### Assessment Techniques

Formative	Summative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are students singing the correct root note pitches and using the correct solfege syllables along with the chord progression? If not, teacher may wind back to review 1) reading the notation, or 2) the pattern of the 12-bar blues progression.</li> <li>• Are students able to perform body movements and then begin singing at the correct time? If not, teacher may wind back to review the sections of <i>Sweet Home Chicago</i> and the order in which they occur. They may also re-list criteria students can listen for to know when the sections change.</li> <li>• Are students able to perform the correct chords of the blues progression, and in the correct order? If not, teacher may wind back instruction to review how to play each of the chords and/or the order in which they occur according to the 12-bar blues pattern.</li> </ul>	<p>Students who understand the material will be able to effectively demonstrate and apply it to listening and use of the 12-bar blues progression and blues form. Students will be not only able to identify characteristics of the form of the song using criteria established in the PREPARE portion of the lesson, but they will also identify where the changes in the chord progression occur by playing them on piano and guitar.</p>

#### Accommodations/Differentiation

If classroom is not equipped with enough keyboards and/or guitars for the whole class to play at the same time (assuming two students to one keyboard, one student per guitar), then teacher may have multiple groups at a time: one group playing keyboard, one on guitar, and the other continuing to sing before rotating group assignments.

#### Extension (where will you go next?)

- Students who are able to play the chord progression well may take it one step further and learn to add the 7<sup>th</sup> of the chords, first on just V, then on V and IV, and then on all three chords of the progression.
- Students may eventually be given the activity to compose their own blues song! They will have learned about the common themes of the blues, the chord progression, and the form at this point, so they will have all the tools for doing so.
- Special project: students who are especially proficient in GarageBand may use it to compose their own blues backing track.

Eisengrein, Peterson 2022

Links:

- *Sweet Home Chicago* by Freddie King [video](#)

## “The Life of Jazz” Lesson #4

<b>Lesson Title</b> <i>Let's Improvise!</i>		<b>Grade Level:</b> 5 <sup>th</sup> grade
<b>Goal</b> ( <i>what's the BIG IDEA? Where is this one lesson going?</i> )  Students will be able to improvise over polyrhythmic ostinati and the 12-bar blues progression using the tonic major pentatonic scale.		
<b>Learning Objectives &amp; FL K-5 Music Learning Standard Addressed</b>  3.) <b>MU.5.S.1.1</b> Improvise rhythmic and melodic phrases to create simple variations on familiar melodies.  4.) <b>MU.5.S.1.2</b> Compose short vocal or instrumental pieces using a variety of sound sources.		
<b>Areas of Music Experience</b> <input type="checkbox"/> performing music, singing <input type="checkbox"/> performing music, playing <input type="checkbox"/> creating music, improv <input type="checkbox"/> creating music, composing <input type="checkbox"/> listening to music <input type="checkbox"/> moving to music <input type="checkbox"/> analyzing music <input type="checkbox"/> connecting music to history/culture	<b>Music Concept Focus</b> <input type="checkbox"/> beat/pulse <input type="checkbox"/> rhythm <input type="checkbox"/> meter <input type="checkbox"/> accent <input type="checkbox"/> tempo <input type="checkbox"/> form <input type="checkbox"/> texture <input type="checkbox"/> timbre	<b>Materials &amp; Room Set Up</b> <input type="checkbox"/> pitch <input type="checkbox"/> melody <input type="checkbox"/> harmony <input type="checkbox"/> dynamics <input type="checkbox"/> style/genre <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> • Standard Classroom Setup • Orff Instruments: xylophone, bass xylophone, metallophones, floor tom • Keyboards
<b>Procedures to Support Learning</b> (each lesson segment should include an (1) Opening, (2) Presentation, (3) Application and Assessment, and (4) Conclusion. A complete 45-60 minute might include 2-3 lesson segments, though project-based lessons may require an entire lesson devoted to one primary task).		
<b>PREPARE:</b> Preparing students for learning to improvise. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare students for performing the class blues composition by reviewing what each group will be performing: review of five-part, teacher-designed polyrhythm using body percussion; review of the 12-bar blues progression, this time in C Major for keyboards and Orff instruments.</li> <li>Prepare students for improvising over the Major blues progression by teaching the C major pentatonic scale and how to construct it using whole and half steps.</li> </ul>		
<b>PRESENT &amp; PRACTICE:</b> Practice for learning to improvise. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once students have learned how to build the C Major pentatonic scale, teacher will begin to introduce the <i>jazz performance project</i>.</li> <li>First: Teacher will introduce the polyrhythm which will be performed by one group. Just like in lesson 1 on Afro-Cuban polyrhythms, Teacher will add body percussion one part at a time to build the five-part polyrhythm using claps, snaps, stomps, chest thumps, and rubbing hands together.</li> <li>Students will perform the polyrhythm altogether as a class, first in two parts, then three, then four, then finally five.</li> <li>Teacher will let students know to keep these parts in memory, because they will all be performing in the polyrhythm group at some point.</li> <li>Teacher will move on to teach what group 2 will be performing in the project: keyboards! All students will move to the keyboards and spend 10 minutes reviewing the 12-bar blues progression in C Major while reading a simple lead sheet.</li> <li>Teacher will move to teach what group 3 will be performing. They will perform the outline of the chords in the 12-bar blues progression on Orff instruments. One of the instruments, the xylophone, will be deemed the “improvisation instrument.” During the performance, any student in group 3 who wishes to improvise using the C Major pentatonic scale will be invited to do so.</li> <li>Teacher will organize, assign groups, and begin the <i>jazz performance project</i>.</li> </ul>		

Directions for the *jazz performance project*:

- Students will perform a 12-bar blues-style song over polyrhythms in the form of a 12-bar blues. In between each refrain (the end of the chord progression), there will be a four-measure improvised solo on xylophone by any students currently in group 3 who wish to try. After the four bars of solo, the form will repeat itself from the top and both the polyrhythmic foundation and chord progression will begin again.
- Once all students in group 3 who wish to improvise have done so, the three groups will rotate: the Orff instrument group will move to the polyrhythm group, the polyrhythm group will move to the keyboards, and the keyboard group will move to the Orff instruments.
- The project is designed to give students a chance to interact with the three main learned skills from the jazz unit: performing polyrhythms as a group, playing the 12-bar blues progression on keyboard, and improvising on xylophone using the Major pentatonic scale.

**Vocabulary Words:** pentatonic scale, improvise/improvisation

**Assessment Techniques**

Formative	Summative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are students able to name the notes and understand the building of the Major pentatonic scale? If not, teacher may wind back to review half steps and whole steps. Instruction could be in reference to building the Major scale, a concept students are already familiar with at this point.</li> <li>• Are students able to perform the parts of the polyrhythm individually as a group? If not, teacher may wind back to perform the polyrhythm in less parts first before adding more complexity.</li> <li>• Are students able to perform the 12-bar blues progression adequately on keyboard and Orff instruments? If not, teacher may wind back to review the major triads of the I, IV, and V chord.</li> <li>• Are students able to use the notes of the major pentatonic scale in an effective and innovative way during their 4-bar solo? If not, teacher may wind back to review the Major pentatonic scale and its notes.</li> </ul>	<p>Students who have an understanding of concepts within the jazz unit will be able to demonstrate them effectively as part of the summative <i>jazz performance project</i>.</p>

**Accommodations/Differentiation**

Students who are unable to perform certain parts of the project will be invited to either remain in a different group throughout or use their body as able to perform parts of the polyrhythms and on the instruments.  
 All students who are interested

**Extension** (where will you go next?)

- This unit has the potential to continue into middle school and high school grades with the introduction of more “modern” jazz styles: swing and big bands of the ‘20s, ‘30s, and ‘40s, Bebop of the ‘60s, and technological advancements in music of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- This unit could also segue into units on other forms of popular music, such as Rock of the ‘70s and ‘80s, hip hop of the ‘90s, or modern pop music of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- As students begin to learn more advanced musical concepts, become introduced to more music technology, and play band instruments, the skills and concepts learned in either of the above unit extensions could be applied in various ways.



## Resources

“Standard Classroom Setup” assumes presence of chairs, projector, whiteboard, and common school supplies.

YouTube links:

- African polyrhythms:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZHfmgIb4mc&feature=youtu.be>
- Cuban *Habanero*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zNow1XiIN0I>
- Afro-Cuban polyrhythms:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wVxb4pWetGw&feature=youtu.be>
- Brazilian *Baião*:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ft7N8KD8IGQ&feature=youtu.be>
- New Orleans Street band: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HqKgFBWdLLQ>
- Trombone Shorty NOLA-style: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G-vylHF5zI0&t=100s>
- Freddie King, *Sweet Home Chicago* live:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXIGludENwI>

Instruments:

- [Keyboards](#) (two students to one keyboard): three-five keyboards
- Orff [Instruments](#): at least two metallophones, at least three xylophones (two for “ensemble,” one for improviser), at least two bass xylophones (C and G).
- Acoustic guitars (six-eight), guitar picks