

Unit VI: Remembrance and the Creation of Memory

Grade Levels: 9-12

Time: 1-3 class periods

Lesson HVI-19: Music as an Instrument of Memory

Objectives:

- Students will be able to analyze the lyrics and patterns in the music to interpret what the composer is saying through song.
- Students will be able to explain how people may find music a powerful means to express many different emotions, to honor people, and to memorialize both tragic and joyous events.
- Students will be able to explain how the culture, traditions, and history of a people and a nation may be traced and analyzed through its music.

Key Terms:

lyrics	verse	stanza	theme
refrain	image	chorus	bridge

Materials:

9-11 songs by other artists: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_songs_about_the_September_11_attacks

Bruce Springsteen and the Rising <http://www.musicbox-online.com/9-11.html>

- http://www.lyricsfreak.com/b/bruce+springsteen/the+rising_20025196.html
- http://www.lyricsfreak.com/b/bruce+springsteen/into+the+fire_20025188.html
- http://www.lyricsfreak.com/b/bruce+springsteen/youre+missing_20025199.html
- http://www.lyricsfreak.com/b/bruce+springsteen/my+city+of+ruins_20025192.html
- http://www.lyricsfreak.com/b/bruce+springsteen/countin+on+a+miracle_20025185.html

http://www.songfacts.com/category:songs_about_historical_events.php

Hank Fellows (www.9-11Songs.com)

Copies of the lyrics of songs by Hank Fellows: "The Spirit of America," "Halfway to Heaven," and "One Heart, One Voice." (at end of lesson)

Background Information:

Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, a number of musicians sought to understand 9/11 through music.

Day One

Activities/Procedures:

1. Review the key terms and ask students for definitions of each term. Terms should be defined in reference to their musical definition. If students are unable to offer an acceptable definition of a term(s), refer to an on-line dictionary or a hands-on dictionary.
2. Initiate a class discussion about the many uses of music in people's lives and make a list. A few possibilities are as follows: for entertainment; to commemorate an event; to express an emotion; to share a sound or emotion with others such as grief and sorrow, introspection, or humor, etc.; to set the mood in a film, television show, or other performance; to march, dance, strut, or just walk or saunter along; etc. The students may have many other

suggestions drawn from their own experiences with music.

3. Tell the class that you are going to play a song for them. * (Go to http://www.songfacts.com/category:songs_about_historical_events.php) All they need to do is to listen carefully to the words and music.
4. After the students have listened attentively to the song, tell them that you are going to play the song again but this time you want them to listen and to read the lyrics as they listen to the music. Distribute the sheet of lyrics to the students and replay the music.
5. At the conclusion of the song, ask the students what themes or ideas the songwriter has written about in this song.

Evidence of Understanding:

Working individually, the students will write a brief essay describing/explaining how the songwriter reflected and expressed some of the same feelings and emotions that many people were experiencing at that time. Include in the essay an explanation of the way in which the composer's work continues and is part of the tradition of music as a part of the history of a people/nation.

Day Two

Activities/Procedures:

1. Bruce Springsteen's album was recorded in 2002, as a response to 9/11. It contains fifteen songs; almost all were written after 9/11. One song, "My City of Ruins," was written by Springsteen as an expression of his feelings for his hometown, Asbury Park. The song can also be analyzed in view of 9/11.
2. Divide the class into groups using any of the following four songs from the album: "Into the Fire," "My City of Ruins," "The Rising," and "You're Missing." [Groups are determined by teacher according to class size. Note: For each song, at least two students will be analyzing the same song.]
3. In groups, students will read and analyze their song and answer the following questions:
 - Explain the figurative language used in the lyrics.
 - How can these lyrics refer to 9/11?
 - Whose voice is Springsteen using (victim, loved one of victim, etc.)?
4. Suggestions and hints for the teacher
 - "Into the Fire" - the plight of firefighters that day
 - a. "up the stairs"
 - b. "love & duty"
 - c. How might "strength give us strength," "faith give us faith," "hope give us hope," and "love bring us love?"
 - "My City of Ruins" – symbol of NYC
 - a. What images do the lyrics convey?
 - b. How might this be NYC after the tragedy?
 - c. Explain the spirituality in this song.
 - d. Why do people turn to religion in the midst of crisis?
 - e. Explain the symbolic significance of this place. Is it just a location?
 - "The Rising" – victim rising beyond the fire
 - a. The song progresses from the person feeling a great burden to one reaching the sky.
 - b. At the end of the song, the image of the sky is frequently repeated... from "blackness and sorrow" to "sky of blessed life." What might each line/stage represent?
 - "The Missing" – the loved one praying for the victim's return
 - a. Explain the scene at home.
 - b. How do you know the victim has a family?
 - c. What is the significance of the last two lines, "God's drifting in heaven, devil's in the mailbox/ I got dust on my shoes, nothing but teardrops?"
 - d. After student analyses, ask students to find any word or line in the songs that show hope.

5. Have all students examine the lyrics to "Countin' on a Miracle."

- Find the lines that show sadness.
- Find the lines that show hope.
- How is remembrance a strong emotion in this song?
What message is Springsteen giving to those who lost loved ones?
- How do we make our own miracles?
- Listen to the audio of the songs. Continue discussion
- Does the musical artist stress any feelings in each song?
- How does his singing style bring emotions to the songs?
- After loss, how can music give hope?
- Could these songs also be applied to other sad situations in life?
- How does music help us heal?

Evidence for Understanding:

1. Response to questions as an essay:

- How can music respond to a tragedy?
- How does music affect remembrance & memory?
- How can the musical artist convey his/her own feelings of grief while echoing the feelings of so many others?
- Does the musician have the right to speak for those lost? Can music heal?
- What other forms of art can express feelings and preserve memory?

Or

Activities/Procedures:

- Hank Fellows wrote a number of songs reflecting his exploration of the events of September 11, personal and national responses to the day, and the many emotions people experience since then. Fellows wrote "One Heart, One Voice" four years after 9/11/01.
- Tell the students that the title of the song they will hear and discuss today is "One Heart, One Voice."
- Remind the class to jot down some notes for themselves when they hear some words that they think is a key to a theme (distribute lyric sheets).
- After the song has concluded, move the students into pairs for a pair/share activity or small groups of three or four for a team approach. Each pair/group should use any notes they may have taken as well as their memory of the song to write down some of the themes found in the song. Give the students 5-10 minutes for this activity.
- Regroup into the full class and have each group report its suggestions regarding the song's themes. Make note of the themes suggested by the students.

Evidence of Understanding:

What differences do you see between this song and others written shortly after 9/11/01?

Explain how a songwriter's perspective differs from song to song. Is there any significant difference in the "mood" or "tone" of the music itself in the songs? Explain.

Extension Activities: Taking Action and Giving Service:

1. Obtain the lyrics of other songs written about 9/11/01 or poems about the events of that day. List some of the

words and phrases that are used to describe 9/11/01 in each song and/or poem. Who are the composers and/or authors of each piece of music or poem? Are the words used of a positive nature or a pessimistic nature? Are descriptions of the day more concerned with the physical reality or the pall cast by events of the day? Explain and give examples from several songs and/or poems. Give the name of the song/or poem and the composer/author. Which work do you think best conveys the nature of the day, events, and mood of the people? Why?

2. Write a poem or song that you believe accurately describes the day of September 11, 2001 in mood and in physical reality. Alternatively, paint or draw the scene of that day reflecting the physical and emotional nature of the day.
3. Attend a memorial ceremony for the day of September 11, 2001. Was any music involved in the ceremony? How did the music influence the atmosphere of the memorial ceremony? Find at least three pieces of music written specifically to memorialize an event or a person. For each piece of music, provide the following information: Name of event or person(s); reason for being honored; time period of person or event; reason for "remembering and memorializing."

The Spirit of America

Words & Music by
Hank Fellows

Verse: I see children out playing, their mothers are saying,
Let them be strong as they grow,
I hear old men tell stories of love, war and glory,
When they were still young long ago.

And all along my journey, I feel that light still burning
So deep inside my soul –

Chorus: It's The Spirit of America, I feel it in my heart,
Of generations come and gone, where each one did their part,
Of those who served and fought and died so our children can run free,
A land where truth will always live and fear will never be.

Verse: I see lovers and dreamers, poets and schemers,
All side by side in the sun,
I see those who are stronger helping those who take longer,
So they're home by the time day is done.

And all along the byways, the back roads and the highways,
It's all so clear to me now –

Chorus: It's The Spirit of America, I feel it in my heart,
Of generations come and gone, where each one did their part,
Of those who served and fought and died so our children can run free,
A land where truth will always live and fear will never be.

Repeat: It's The Spirit of America, I feel it in my heart,
Of generations come and gone, where each one did their part,
Of those who served and fought and died so our children can run free,
A land where truth will always live and fear will never be,
A land where truth will always live and fear will never be.

Halfway To Heaven

(A 9-11 Tribute)

Words & Music by

Hank Fellows

Verse: On a bright September morning in the greatest city known,
A gentle breeze was blowing through the place they called their home,
And high above the city, they were working side by side,
In the gleaming towers reaching far up to the sky.

Chorus: They were Halfway to Heaven, and I know they're all there now,
Fathers, sons, and daughters, and mothers free and proud,
And those who raced into the flames to save their fellow man,
I know that they're all home now.

Verse: They will always be among us for their love can never die,
And we shall walk together though the years will all pass by,
And at ev'ry graduation, and wherever love is true,
Set a place at the table, for they will be there too.

Chorus: They were Halfway to Heaven, and I know they're all there now,
Fathers, sons, and daughters, and mothers free and proud,
And those who raced into the flames to save their fellow man,
I know that they're all home now.

Repeat: They were Halfway to Heaven, and I know they're all there now,
Fathers, sons, and daughters, and mothers free and proud,
And those who raced into the flames to save their fellow man,
I know that they're all home now,
I know that they're all home now.

One Heart, One Voice

Words and Music by
Hank Fellows

Verse: When I think how it happened long ago,
A nation born upon this rugged shore,
I think of those who once dreamed a special dream,
To build a land like none that came before.
They dreamt of

Chorus: One Heart, One Voice, one land where all can be free,
A dream called America, A dream for you and me.

Verse: When I think of the faces young and old,
When first they came to see our mighty land,
I'm proud we welcomed each and ev'ry one,
And gave them hope and a helping hand.
We gave them

Chorus: One Heart, One Voice, one land where all can be free,
A dream called America, a dream for you and me.

Bridge: And on the dark day in September,
Those who planned far across the sea,
They thought our Towers tumbling down
Would bring us to our knees,
But oh how they were wrong,
Oh how we were strong –
We rose with

Chorus: One Heart, One Voice, one land where all can be free,
A dream called America, a dream for you and me,
We rose with

Repeat: One Heart, One Voice, one land where all can be free,
A dream called America, a dream for you and me,
A dream for you and me.