

# Music Lesson

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**Lesson Name:** Evaluating Popular Music  
**For Grades:** 5, 6

## National Standard Goals:

6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
  - a. Identify simple music forms when presented aurally.
  - b. Demonstrate perceptual skills by moving, by answering questions about, and by describing aural examples of music of various styles representing diverse cultures.
  - c. Use appropriate terminology in explaining music, music notation, music instruments and voices, and music performances.
  - d. Identify the sounds of a variety of instruments, including many orchestra and band instruments, and instruments from various cultures, as well as children's voices and male and female adult voices.
7. Evaluating music and music performances.
  - a. Devise criteria for evaluating performances and compositions.
  - b. Explain, using appropriate music terminology, their personal preferences for specific musical works and styles.

## Materials Needed:

Recording of *La Bamba* or other popular music, music description forms, T-chart for each class, recorded popular music brought in by students

## Procedure:

### Quadrant 1: Why?

1. Listen to *La Bamba* then ask group to whisper the meter to the captain, captains stand when they are ready to answer. Award points for correct answer (4).
2. Ask students to discuss with their group as many things as they perceive in the music, such as what instruments (jarana [8-string chord guitar], requinto [small guitar], harp), how many vocal parts (2), who is singing (men), what language (Spanish), clap the rhythmic ostinato that runs through the whole song (titi ta titi ta titi ta ta), does melody in the singers part move mainly by step or leap (step) is the tempo fast, medium, or slow, where do you think the music is from?
3. In a round robin answering format, give one point for each new description item the captains can name. Use incorrect answers for teachable moments.

### Quadrant 2: What?

4. On a scale of 10 predict whether this music is very popular (10) or not at all popular (0) where it comes from. Groups discuss with captain who gives answer. Teacher writes number by points, then gives a point for every answer that is 10. The music is very popular.
5. What makes music popular? Think of some music you know that you and a lot of people like. What are its characteristics? Pass out the form & have groups work on writing responses in each category. Have each group report to the whole class. Award points for thoughtful, meaningful, accurate responses.
6. If you and your friends like a piece of music, do you think everyone in the world likes it the same as you? Why or why not? What do you think causes differences? Should there be just one popular music? Why or why not? What would we gain/ what would we lose?

### Quadrant 3: How?

7. To practice identifying things we like and why we like them, you are encouraged to bring in one of your favorite songs on CD or tape. By listening to each others' favorites and discussing why music is popular, we will gain a greater understanding of ourselves, our

musical preferences, and what makes music interesting. There are some guidelines we will follow: (see back of form)

- \* Write your name and home room teacher's name on the CD case or tape case, so it can be returned to you.
  - \* Recordings brought to school cannot contain (1) profane language, (2) glorification of violence, (3) advocacy of drug use, (4) advocacy of intolerance toward any individual or group of people, or (5) promotion of a specific religious doctrine.
  - \* Students bringing music to school must fill out an information form for **EACH** music title you want the class to listen to [see form on the reverse side] and tape it to the CD case or tape case.
  - \* Music and attached forms must be given to Dr. Kassner at least one day before it is shared with the class. Tapes must be cued to the starting place of the music to be listened to.
8. Listen to several examples brought in by students. When discussing musical preferences in class, comments may be made **ONLY** about the music. No comments about the person who brought the music or that person's musical taste will be made. Our goal is to understand what makes music popular, not whose or what music is popular. Award points for bringing in musical examples with forms (10 points each + grade helper). Award points for thoughtful, meaningful, and accurate responses.

**Quadrant 4: What if?**

9. What if we were writing a book on popular music. What would we write about the characteristics of popular music? Make a T-chart to agglomerate ideas. Have each group work together to create a summation that arranges these ideas in a logical, coherent, paragraph form. Award 20 points for each thoughtful, meaningful, and accurate summation that exhibits higher level thinking skills and includes all the ideas generated by the class.

**Method of Evaluation:**

Teacher continuously observes students' working together, answers to questions, music contributed, and written summations.

## Exploring Popular Music

Throughout history, there has always been music on the lighter side that appealed to many people. Most of it is popular for a short time, then discarded when new music catches people's attention. People's taste in music changes over time, just as people's taste in clothing, hair style, etc. change over time. Different groups of people have different preferences in their music.

What is popular right now among students at Panther Lake Elementary? Does everyone like the same kind of music, or are there differences among different people? Why is some music well-liked and other music less-liked? What characteristics in the music are most appealing?

Students are urged to bring their favorite recorded music to school to share with others in music class. By listening to each others' favorites and discussing why music is popular, we will gain a greater understanding of ourselves, our musical preferences, and what makes music interesting. There are some guidelines we will follow:

- \* Write your name and home room teacher's name on the CD case or tape case, so it can be returned to you.
- \* Recordings brought to school cannot contain (1) profane language, (2) glorification of violence, (3) advocacy of drug use, (4) advocacy of intolerance toward any individual or group of people, or (5) promotion of a specific religious doctrine.
- \* When discussing musical preferences in class, comments may be made ONLY about the music. No comments about the person who brought the music or that person's musical taste will be made.
- \* Students bringing music to school must fill out an information form for EACH music title you want the class to listen to [see form on the reverse side] and tape it to the CD case or tape case.
- \* Music and attached forms must be given to Dr. Kassner at least one day before it is shared with the class. Tapes must be cued to the starting place of the music to be listened to.

Name of music \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

Name of student \_\_\_\_\_ Home room teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Group (circle one):

Happy Dopey Bashful Grumpy Sleepy  
Doc

Write below at least one **SPECIFIC** characteristic in the music that appeals to you and why:  
[General statements, such as 'I like it,' 'It's cool,' 'It's got a good beat,' 'The melody goes up and down,' etc. do not qualify.]

Melody \_\_\_\_\_

Harmony \_\_\_\_\_

Rhythm/Meter \_\_\_\_\_

Form \_\_\_\_\_

Expression \_\_\_\_\_

Lyrics \_\_\_\_\_

Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

5 points will be earned for every category containing a thoughtful and accurate comment about the music. [Attach another sheet of paper if you need more space.]