



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

2006 Volume IV: Native America: Understanding the Past through Things

Native American Music and Dance

Guide for Curriculum Unit 06.04.09, published September 2006

by Enetta Nelson Rose

The rationale for developing my curriculum unit is to provide an interdisciplinary unit for music history, theory, social studies, geography, and to introduce the concepts of field study research. More importantly, I wanted to use a method for helping my students retain both their knowledge and skills incorporated.

The discourse of my unit will survey some of the musical practices and tribal traditions that are a forgotten part of the American folk culture and music. The overall organization of my unit is divided into the following sections. The first section is the introduction and a brief explanation of my title. The second section is the unit rationale. Within this section, are my reasons and purposes for developing this topic into a curriculum unit. The third section is entitled "pedagogical strategies". In this section, I discuss the instructional methodologies for cultivating successful learning outcomes. Moreover, my state's curriculum guidelines and the Houston Independent School District's guidelines are mentioned (refer to the appendix). In the fourth section, the demographic data or profile as well as my classroom setup are discussed. Section five contains detailed information about the unit objectives and the expected learning outcomes. The next section is a discussion of the historical background and awareness of the culture before the coming of the European settlers. The topics in this section are tribal social systems, functions of music, Native American culture areas of the southeast and the northeast. The Southeast Culture tribes surveyed are Alabama, Choctaw, Coushatta, and Creeks. The tribal ceremonial rituals, traditions, performances, dance and musical genres, plus, theoretical analysis of melodic progressions, scales, rhythm, and the meter of various songs were examined.

The Northeast Culture Area tribes discussed in the unit are the Iroquois Nations and the Illinois. The tribal ceremonial rituals, traditions, performances, dance and musical genres, plus theoretical analysis of melodic progressions, scales, rhythm, and the meter of various songs were examined.

The last section of this unit is a summary or conclusion. By preparing this unit, I hope to encourage more teachers of the arts to write interdisciplinary units that will reflect an aesthetic appreciation for culture, art, dance, and music. In addition to this, by making correlated distinctions between compositional devices that are utilized to show idiomatic cultural influences on folk music we will reinforce the need to keep the arts in our schools because, "Art is not an end in itself, but a means of addressing humanity" (Modest Mussorgsky as stated in *Harper's Book of Quotations*).

(Developed for Piano and Music, grades 7-8; recommended for Piano and Music, grades 7-8)

<https://teachers.yale.edu>

©2023 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University, All Rights Reserved. Yale National Initiative®, Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute®, On Common Ground®, and League of Teachers Institutes® are registered trademarks of Yale University.

For terms of use visit https://teachers.yale.edu/terms_of_use