



9TH-12TH GRADERS

Objective: A look through history on how musicians have used art to resist societal .
Injustice.

Throughout history, artists have used all medians of art to create change during various events of injustice within American society, whether at a local or national level. Today we are going to look at a few examples of this through the lens of music.

Please watch the following videos & answer the questions for the discussion prompts below:

1960's:

Nina Simone - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=inNBpizpZkE>

Mahalia Jackson - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHOgs5jxG-w>

Sam Cooke - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPr3yvkhYsE>

Reflection Questions:

- Each of these songs was released through the 1960s during the struggles of the civil rights movement, how do you think these three songs were reacted to by their respective audiences?
- How do these songs make you feel listening to them?
- Is there any connection between the messages told within the songs and what is going on in the world today?
- What do you think the artist was trying to get across to their listeners? What is possibly something that they felt people should do after listening to their music?



Nina Simone - born Eunice Kathleen Waymon, was a professional singer-songwriter-arranger-civil rights activist. She was born February 1933 & passed away in April 2003, in France. She was known for her enchanting abilities as a storyteller as a singer and she actively spoke out against the injustice that she saw around her through her music. Which helped her obtain the title of 'High Priestess of Soul'. "An Artist's duty is to reflect the times". - Nina Simone



Mahalia Jackson - born in October 1911 & passed in January 1972, Ms. Jackson is considered to be the 'Queen of Gospel'. She has a career spanning 40 years and was one of the greatest musical artists in music history. She started singing in church as a child and went on to sing during the 1963 civil rights - March at Washington with Martin Luther King Jr. Her single, Move On Up A Little Higher in 1947 sold millions of copies & was the highest-selling single in gospel music of the time. And after gaining international success, she even went on to sing at John F. Kennedy's inauguration.





Sam Cooke - born in January 1931 & passed in December 1964, Cooke was the son of a minister and thus started off as a gospel singer. He went on to perform with the group - The Soul Stirrers, a gospel group before he went on to perform as a solo act. He would later become known as the Father of Soul Music. With hits like “You Send Me”, “Wonderful World”, and “A Change is Gonna Come”, his music has stood the test of time and allowed him to be awarded a place in the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1986. Outside of his musical talent, he was also business savvy. He started his own music publishing company in 1959 which has allowed him more artistic freedom in how his music is still handled today.



Activity:

Imagine you are a recording artist today, you are told by family & friends that there needs to be a song that explains everything that has happened during quarantine. Although you are hesitant at first, you start thinking through all the events from the lockdown to now:

- What do you think is important to your audience to hear you speak about?
- What social topics will you highlight?
- What might the tune sound like?
- What do you want others to do after they listen to your song?



After sharing with a classmate your thoughts, try in groups to create a song that highlights the ideas that you thought about previously. Once completed, share out with the class.

**Note: If creating a song or singing in public is a subject of concern for students, the above prompt can still be utilized to create a poem, a scene, or a dance. Alter prompt to allow students to express themselves in whichever fashion best suits their comfortability.*



6TH-8TH GRADERS

Objective: Students will focus on power & resistance through the lens of music composition.

Throughout history, artists have used all medians of art to create change during various events of injustice within American society, whether at a local or national level. Today we are going to look at a few examples of this through the lens of music.

Please watch the following videos - pay special attention to the lyrics and how each singer says what they are communicating, allow some time for natural discussion before proceeding to the activity below:

1960's:

Nina Simone - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=inNBpizpZkE>



Nina Simone - born Eunice Kathleen Waymon, was a professional singer-songwriter-arranger-civil rights activist. She was born February 1933 & passed away in April 2003, in France. She was known for her enchanting abilities as a storyteller as a singer and she actively spoke out against the injustice that she saw around her through her music. Which helped her obtain the title of 'High Priestess of Soul'. "An Artist's duty is to reflect the times". - Nina Simone

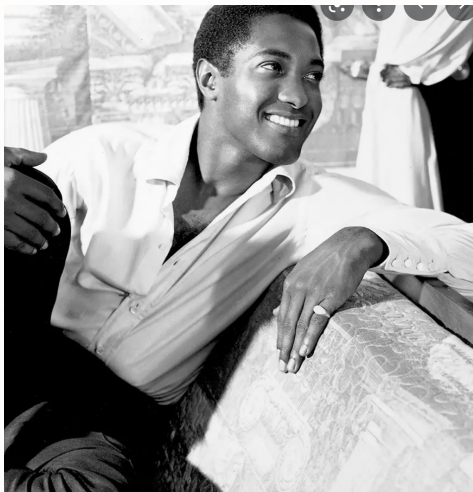


Mahalia Jackson - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHOgs5jxG-w>



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Sam Cooke - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPr3yvkhYsE>



Sam Cooke - born in January 1931 & passed in December 1964, Cooke was the son of a minister and thus started off as a gospel singer. He went on to perform with the group



- The Soul Stirrers, a gospel group before he went on to perform as a solo act. He would later become known as the Father of Soul Music. With hits like “You Send Me”, “Wonderful World”, and “A Change is Gonna Come”, his music has stood the test of time and allowed him to be awarded a place in the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1986. Outside of his musical talent, he was also business savvy. He started his own music publishing company in 1959 which has allowed him more artistic freedom in how his music is still handled today.

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After sharing with a classmate your thoughts, try in groups to create a song that highlights the ideas that you thought about previously. Once completed, share out with the class.

**Note: If creating a song or singing in public is a subject of concern for students, the above prompts can still be utilized to create a poem, a scene, or a dance. Alter prompt to allow students to express themselves in whichever fashion best suits their comfortability.*



4TH & 5TH GRADERS

Objective: Students will create pieces focusing on self-empowerment & how to handle difficult situations.

Please have students watch this clip:

Lion King: Simba confronts Scar - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KSti-2Z_XoY

Reflection Questions:

- What are some ways Simba stands up for his pride?
- How does Scar try to intimidate Simba?
- How do we know this is a serious scene?
- What does the music in the background tell us about what is going on?

Now try re-watching the clip with everyone's eyes closed, consider these questions when listening for a second time?

- Do you know now that this is a serious scene?
- Do you notice any new emotions for yourself while listening to the clip this time?
- If yes, what was different? Why do you think that was? If not, what stayed the same for you?

Whether you personally felt a difference or not, music in a movie & how the characters say their lines helps us know the mood of what is happening in that scene. It is through how Simba speaks to Scar, how everyone reacts to what they say, and the music in the background that allows us to know that this is a serious scene. We also know that this is a really difficult thing for Simba to do, standing up to his uncle Scar, after returning home after being gone for so long. *Have there ever been times where standing up for yourself felt difficult whether with friends or family?*



Activity:

Imagine you are asked to write a commercial to show kids how to stand up for themselves. Remember, commercials are short and should be no more than 2-3 minutes long. You will want to have music in the background (and maybe even sound effects too) as your commercial plays out. Get in small groups to create your commercials. When you are done, share out with your class.

** Note: Remind students to have fun as they complete this activity. The goal is not for them to be stressed about what they are creating but just to have fun and create a story. Outside of the instructions, students should make sure to be heard when they share out to the class and support one another as they each present their commercials.*