

# WoodSongs WS2 MIDDLE Lesson Plan



April Ballard, M.Ed, BS

***Title: Celebration of Appalachian Music***

***Subject: Language Arts & Music***

***Length of Lesson: Two class periods***

***Context (Topic and Summary of Lesson Identified):***

***The topic of this lesson is, "Celebration of Appalachian Music".***

This lesson plan is designed to educate students about the history of Appalachian music, while also encouraging an appreciation of it and an inspiration to create their own music and art. The goal of this lesson is for students to understand the history of Appalachian music as it relates specifically to story-telling and ballads. The lesson will enable the students to make a connection from music to writing and creating their own ballad. The lesson will allow students to apply what they learn about Appalachian music into their lives by creating their own Appalachian story and ballad. Within the lesson, students will have an opportunity to explore the artists and their passion for art historically and inspiration to create.

***Grade Level: 7 & 8***

**Objective:** Students will develop an understanding of the history of Appalachian music and story-telling. Students will be able to identify and appreciate this as it relates to the music and the art of story-telling. This will allow them to learn about history and culture, and will also allow them to apply this knowledge and creativity to create their own ballad.

**Connection to Standards for 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts:**

- Analyze how a dramas or poems form or structure contributes to its meaning.
- Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.

Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.

Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events

- Create a design to communicate setting and mood using music and a variety of sound sources.

- Elements of drama: plot development, rising action, turning point, falling action, suspense, theme, language, empathy, motivation, discovery
- Analyze the characters' actions, considering their situations and basic motivations.
- Relate the theme of a theatrical work to personal experiences
- Discuss how diverse cultures, periods, and styles affect drama

*Vocabulary within lesson: Genre, Appalachia, Story-Telling, Ballad*

**Ballad:** A ballad is a narrative song in which each stanza of text is sung to the same melody. Brought to the American colonies by the earliest British settlers, the ballad form has remained in oral tradition through the present day, particularly in rural parts of the southeastern United States. (<http://www.encyclopediaofappalachia.com/entry.php?rec=31>)

**Genre:** a category of artistic composition, as in music or literature, characterized by similarities in form, style, or subject matter.

**Story-Telling-** Responses may vary and encourage students to think reflect upon what they feel story-telling was like in the history of Appalachian times.

**Appalachia:** What does Appalachia mean to you? This could be a personal reflection as well as discussing the geographical term.

*Description of Lesson/Activities & Procedure:*

**Introduction:** The lesson will extend into two class periods. The lesson will be introduced with a fundamental question which allows students to begin thinking about music and the history of music. This will help the students begin to think about music and how it relates to their lives and also begin to explore what they know about Appalachian music and access prior knowledge, before watching episode 781 of WoodSongs Old-Time Radio Hour, "Celebration of Appalachian Music". Questions to begin an opening discussion may include: What are some of your favorite instruments? What are some of your favorite genres of music? What do you think of when you think of Appalachian music? What inspires you to be a story-teller?

After this warm up, the class will then watch episode 731 of WoodSongs Old-Time Radio Hour. After watching the episode, teacher will ask students to reflect upon what they learned from the episode. Some possible questions include: What did you notice about the sounds of the instruments? What stood out most to you within the episode? Where do you find your inspiration for writing your story and being a story-teller? What specific instrument would you like to learn more about and why? What did you think of the version of the Frank Sinatra and Tony Bennett song, "Fly Me to the Moon?" Do you find it interesting to hear songs you may know, but performed in a different style and genre? This will last until the end of the first class period.

For the next class period: We will begin by discussing the history of Appalachian Music. I have used the following as a reference:

<http://www.encyclopediaofappalachia.com/entry.php?rec=31>

The Encyclopedia of Appalachia is a good resource and goes into detail about ballads and each verse and the meanings.

The goal of this lesson is to have students think about story-telling as it relates to Appalachian music. What do you think story-telling means and why is it important when creating and writing music? What type of story would you wish to tell when writing music and/or a song of your own? How would you set your story to music to create a ballad?

After discussing and having students begin to discuss their inspiration and story, students will then have the remaining minutes to write an introduction piece to their ballad. The ballad should be at least three verses. Students will include which instruments they would like to set their story to and/or sounds that create music. Students are encouraged to think about various instruments they heard throughout WoodSongs Old-Time Radio Hour. For example, would you like to include a banjo, a mandolin, and/or guitar? Why? Reflect upon how you felt hearing these instruments throughout WoodSongs Old-Time Radio Hour.

*Tips for writing a ballad as listed on Purdue Owl:* <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

Ballads tell of an event. They were often used to spread the news, provide entertainment, or create a "bigger than real life" story.

Ballad Writing Tips (Purdue Owl)

- often have verses of four lines
- usually have a rhyming pattern: either abac, aabb or acbc (usually the easiest to rhyme)
- repetition often found in ballads
  - entire stanzas can be repeated like a song's chorus
  - lines can be repeated but each time a certain word is changed
  - a question and answer format can be built into a ballad: one stanza asks a question and the next stanza answers the question
- Ballads contain a lot of dialogue.
- Action is often described in the first person
- Two characters in the ballad can speak to each other on alternating lines
- Sequences of "threes" often occur: three kisses, three tasks, three events, for example

The overall goal is for students to write their own ballad and have a class period in which they present their ballads. Students could also extend this and work on completing the ballad by adding music.

*Media/Materials Needed:*

- Tips for writing a ballad to use as a guide

- Example of a ballad to use as a guide would be a nice supplemental material and there is also the option of briefly reviewing one together as a class
- Computer or iPad to explore Encyclopedia of Appalachia & Purdue Owl

**Rubric and Guidelines:**

<b>Demonstrates an understanding of artistic and musical expression</b>	<i>Shows an enriched and strong understanding of the episode of WoodSongs Old-Time Radio Hour and is able to participate and recount main points from the episode.</i>	<i>Shows an understanding of the episode.</i>	<i>Shows somewhat of an understanding of the episode but main points are not clear.</i>	<i>Does not seem to understand the connections the episode is portraying through music and artistic expression.</i>
<b>Demonstrates an understanding of how their ballad will portray a message</b>	<i>Understanding is clear of how the episode celebrates Appalachian history through music and artistic expression; and how this inspires their ballad</i>	<i>Is able to somewhat make the connection from the episode to writing a ballad</i>	<i>Demonstrates an understanding of musical and art expression demonstrated in the episode, but not entirely connecting it to writing their ballad</i>	<i>An understanding of the episode is not evident.</i>
<b>Ballad creatively and thoughtfully designed</b>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Fairly well</i>	<i>Needs some extra guidance</i>	<i>Exhibits little to none of the desired goal</i>
<b>Stays on Task while writing ballad and within the lesson</b>	<i>Stays on task all (100%) of the time.</i>	<i>Stays on task most (99-90%) of the time.</i>	<i>Stays on task some (89%-75%) of the time.</i>	<i>Stays more off task than on task.</i>