



**Muse Machine 2018 SI-Inspired Lesson Plan**

## **African American Artistic Expression in Various Forms**

**Developed by Liz Maxson**

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### **Lesson Plan Summary:**

It has been said that, "If freedom was the mindset of the Roaring Twenties, then jazz was the soundtrack." Largely touted as the only real American music, jazz captured the era of the 1920s in a way that nothing else could. It also set the stage for much of the music and culture that followed. During the Muse Machine 2018 Summer Institute, musicians from the Jazz Power Initiative in NYC and others from Jazz at Lincoln Center presented the ways that this art form reflected that era and influenced the American Identity. Teacher Liz Maxson from Fairlawn High School understood this influence and has captured it in a lesson plan designed for her 10<sup>th</sup> graders. She has successfully tied it to the work of Langston Hughes, the performance of the Alvin Ailey dancers, the music of Louis Armstrong, and the Ohio Learning Standards for literature. The lesson is a refreshing way for students to creatively understand literature's influencers and the ways that they continue to impact American culture today.

<b>Name</b> Elizabeth F. Maxson	<b>School</b> Fairlawn High School	<b>Subject</b> English 10 (Sophomore English)	<b>Date</b> 02/14/19
<b>Inspiration</b>	2017-8 Muse Machine Summer Institute for Educators		
<b>Title</b>	African American Artistic Expression in Various Forms		
<b>I. OVERVIEW</b>	<p><b>A. Summary:</b> The lesson would feature aspects from the "Characteristics of Negro Expression" and elements of basic jazz music from the Muse Machine binder teachers received this past summer. The lesson was designed for sophomores (ENG 10) during our Nonfiction Unit and incorporates artistic expressions prior to reading "Harriet Tubman: The Moses of Her People" by Langston Hughes. While the nonfiction focuses on a famous African American writer writing a biography about another famous African American, I used the opportunity to delve further into spirituals, call and response technique, codes/allegories in the spirituals, and African American artistic expressions.</p> <p><b>B. Standards:</b> <b>RL.9-10.10</b> By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of the grades 9–10 text complexity band, independently and proficiently, building background knowledge and activating prior knowledge in order to make personal, historical, and cultural connections that deepen understanding of complex text.</p> <p><b>SL.9-10.2</b> Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.</p> <p><b>RH.9-10.4</b> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social studies.</p> <p><b>C. Objectives/Outcomes:</b> This lesson is designed to teach students how to identify codes within spirituals, how to explain allegories, and how to critique different types of artistic performance.</p> <p><b>D. Teaching Approach:</b> Lectures and modeling will be the primary teaching approaches for this lesson.</p> <p><b>E. Assessment:</b> Students will be assessed during class discussions, informal "walk-around" observations, with different "quick-write" written responses, and with a standard based quiz at the end of the lesson to check comprehension after the text is read for homework.</p>		
<b>II. LESSON PREPARATION</b>	<p><b>A. Teacher Needs:</b>  Langston Hughes Overview:  <a href="https://www.biography.com/people/langston-hughes-9346313">https://www.biography.com/people/langston-hughes-9346313</a></p> <p>Louis Armstrong "Go Down Moses" (with lyrics):  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vf6jBP4YXwo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vf6jBP4YXwo</a></p> <p>"Hold On" (Negro Spiritual):  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfvLZjofEXA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfvLZjofEXA</a></p>		

	<p>“Wade in the Water” (Alvin Ailey Dance Company on <i>Wendy</i>)  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJvMkIXyec">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJvMkIXyec</a></p> <p>Text: “Harriet Tubman: The Moses of her People” by Langston Hughes</p> <p><b>Student Needs:</b>  Students need journals or notebooks to log or write answers down to questions as they read, watch, and listen.</p>
	<p><b>Teacher Information:</b> Test all links used from online sources before class begins to ensure that the sites are still active and that the web addresses have not changed.</p> <p><b>Helpful Hints:</b> All writings will be done in their journals. If extra assessment is needed, students can be asked to write responses on index cards to turn in at the end of class too.</p> <p><b>B. Student Needs:</b></p> <p><b>Prior Knowledge:</b> Students here have little to no experience with African American spirituals, dance, etc. So they may be unfamiliar with how to read, watch, or be good audience members. Extra instruction may be needed.</p> <p><b>Student Voice:</b> Students are engaged by answering questions verbally and in written responses throughout the lesson so that interest can be maintained. Also students are given opportunities to talk with classmates beside them so that even shy students will be able to discuss what they are reading, listening to, and watching.</p>
	<p><b>Vocabulary:</b> call and response technique, allegory, spirituals, modern dance</p>
<b>III. EVIDENCE/ASSESSMENT OF OUTCOMES</b>	<p>Students’ journals will be assessed to see their levels of learning. I will be able to read their responses, even if they did not vocalize them with the entire class. I will be able to see if they understood the new vocabulary, offered on-topic comments/critiques about the artistic works presented, and understood the background information for the text they are about to read. All journals will be given completion points and feedback regarding their on-demand writing.</p>
<b>IV. ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS</b>	<p>Students will have a better understanding about African American history: spirituals, allegories/codes, Langston Hughes, and Harriet Tubman.</p> <p>Students will have a better understanding about African American jazz music.</p> <p>Students will have a better understanding about African American <i>a cappella</i> singing.</p> <p>Students will have a better understanding about African American modern dance.</p> <p>All of these understandings can help students be more open to African</p>

	American expression in literature and art, so that they may be more familiar with it when it is brought up academically in their other classes or entertainingly in their lives.
<b>V. LEARNING PLAN</b>	
	<b>Prompt:</b> Langston Hughes Overview Question for viewing: Does a famous person writing a biography have more or less credibility? Why? How does art shape how we view history?
	<b>Hooks</b> Related music (jazz or spirituals) could be playing as students are walking in and slides of different images related to this time frame (slavery) could also be playing on the board as students enter.
	Essential Question(s): How does art impact learning nonfiction texts? How do I be a good audience member? What types of art do I like and why?
	<b>Resources:</b> Langston Hughes Overview: <a href="https://www.biography.com/people/langston-hughes-9346313">https://www.biography.com/people/langston-hughes-9346313</a>  Louis Armstrong "Go Down Moses" (with lyrics): <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vf6jBP4YXwo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vf6jBP4YXwo</a>  "Hold On" (Negro Spiritual): <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfvLZjofEXA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfvLZjofEXA</a>  "Wade in the Water" (Alvin Ailey Dance Company on Wendy) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJvMklXyec">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJvMklXyec</a>  Text: "Harriet Tubman: The Moses of her People" by Langston Hughes
	<b>Teacher and Student Performance Tasks:</b> Artistic African Expression Using Spirituals (3 examples in 25 minutes)  1. Listen to Louis Armstrong's "Go Down Moses" <i>Questions to answer: Where do you hear call and response? How does this jazz musician add more to "Go Down Moses?" How do you think slaves would have acted while they were singing this song?</i>  2. Listen to "Hold On" (Negro Spiritual) Explain that this is a modern trio who took a different spiritual and recorded it. "Hold On" (Negro Spiritual) <i>Questions to answer: Where do we hear call and response? Where do we hear code words? How do you think slaves would have acted while they were singing this song? How does this compare to "Go Down Moses?"</i>  3. Watch "Revelations: Wade in the Water" performed by the Alvin Ailey

	<p>Dance Company on The Wendy Williams Show in celebration of Black History Month. <i>Questions to answer: Where do you hear call and response? Where do we hear code words? How do you think slaves would have acted while they were singing this song? How does the dance, background, and costumes help the lyrics "Wade in the Water" be understood by people watching? Which spiritual did you like the most and why?</i></p> <p>4. Homework: Read "Harriet Tubman: The Moses of Her People" by Langston Hughes</p>
	<p><b>Final Review:</b></p> <p>After reading their journals I will know if students were able to find code language/allegories in the text, if students are able "translate" the code and explain them, and I will be able to see which pieces of art had an impact on them and why. Their answers and comments will show not only what they learned, but how they felt about the art presented.</p>
<b><u>VI. LESSON REFLECTION</u></b>	
	<p>Next year, I would like students to create three charts using giant post-it notes where they can share their opinions of the pieces with the other class of the same grade. They could ask each other questions, offer commentary, or simply write words that the art made them think of. The charts could then hang up for several days and be discussed or added to as desired.</p>