



Learning with Lincoln Institute

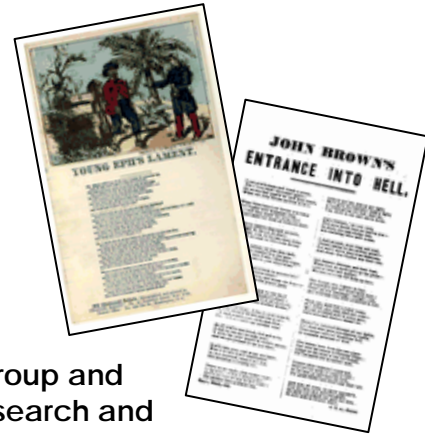
Sponsored by Teaching with Primary Sources at Eastern Illinois University and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
Endorsed by the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission



Political Activism Through Music: Civil War Era

by Stephanie Mitchell

Students view an image of song lyrics from a chosen Civil War era song in order to understand the impact the political climate of the times had on the music of the same period. Students will analyze one song as a large group and one as a small group. Extension would include student research and comparison.



Overview

Objectives:

After completing the activity, students will be able to:

- analyze a piece of music as a historical artifact
- analyze opinions of the time period through its music
- compare music written in the Civil War era to music written during other periods
- write a comparative essay about Civil War and more modern music

Understanding Goal:

Music is a reflection of the cultural and political climate around it.

Investigative Question:

How does the music written during and prior to the Civil War reflect the ideas of the society and era that wrote and sang them? Does modern music have the same reflection?

Time Required:

One class period, three with extensions

Grade Level:

9 - 12

Topic:

Music, Literature

Era:

Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861 - 1877

Illinois Learning Standards:

Fine Arts: 25B, 27

Language Arts: 1, 2, 3, 4A, 5

For information on specific Illinois Learning Standards go to www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/



Learning with Lincoln Institute

Sponsored by Teaching with Primary Sources at
Eastern Illinois University and
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
Endorsed by the
Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission



Preparation

Background for Lesson:

Students will have finished the Gettysburg Address and Emancipation Proclamation in class. During those we will have discussed political and cultural issues such as slavery, abolition, and the Civil War.

Library of Congress Items:

Title: "John Brown's Entrance into Hell"



Collection or Exhibit

America Singing: Nineteenth-Century Song Sheets
Sheet Music

Media Type:

URL:

[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/amss:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(cw20034a\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/amss:@field(DOCID+@lit(cw20034a)))

Title: "The Black Regiment"



Collection or Exhibit

America Singing: Nineteenth-Century Song Sheets
Sheet Music

Media Type:

URL:

[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/amss:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(cw100610\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/amss:@field(DOCID+@lit(cw100610)))

Title: "John Brown"



Collection or Exhibit

America Singing: Nineteenth-Century Song Sheets
Sheet Music

Media Type:

URL:

[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/amss:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(as201860\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/amss:@field(DOCID+@lit(as201860)))

Title: "Lines on the proclamation issued by the tyrant Lincoln, April first, 1863. By a Rebel."



Collection or Exhibit

America Singing: Nineteenth-Century Song Sheets
Sheet Music

Media Type:

URL:

[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/amss:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(as107870\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/amss:@field(DOCID+@lit(as107870)))

Title: "Young Eph's Lament"



Collection or Exhibit

America Singing: Nineteenth-Century Song Sheets
Sheet Music

Media Type:

URL:

[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/amss:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(hc00038d\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/amss:@field(DOCID+@lit(hc00038d)))





Learning with Lincoln Institute


Sponsored by Teaching with Primary Sources at
Eastern Illinois University and
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
Endorsed by the
Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission



Additional Materials:

-  "John Brown's Entrance into Hell" on PowerPoint.

-  Folders containing one of the other four songs for each student. The songs will determine their groups later.

-  "Thinking About Songs As Historical Artifacts" worksheet (2 copies for each student)

Procedure

Description of Teacher Actions:

Activate Prior Knowledge

1. Take student poll – "Is music affected by culture and/or politics?" Discuss results.
2. Discuss briefly the political climate during Civil War and what issues could have affected the music of the period, i.e. slavery, abolition, North vs. South.

Model Learning

1. Show PowerPoint of "John Brown's Entrance into Hell".
2. Discuss song stanza by stanza looking for political issues.
3. Have students look up names and places they do not know.
4. Discuss the song as a whole focusing what we know about the political climate of the time.
5. Students infer why this song was sung and who it would have been sung by.
6. Using what we have concluded, model completion of the Historical Artifacts worksheet with student input.

Student Investigation

1. Students will be given folders containing one of four songs and the Historical Artifacts worksheet.
2. In the groups (based on what song they have), the student will analyze the song and put their conclusions on the worksheet.



Learning with Lincoln Institute

Sponsored by Teaching with Primary Sources at
Eastern Illinois University and
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
Endorsed by the
Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission



3. Have each group present their song and conclusions to the class. Allow the class to provide additional input as needed.

Extension Ideas:

Students will individually choose a song from the America Singing: Nineteenth-Century Song Sheets collection as well as a contemporary song they believe to have political significance. The student will analyze both songs using the Historical Artifact worksheet. Using that information the student will compose a comparative essay discussing the similarities and differences between the songs and how the songs illustrate the political climate during which they were written.

Evaluation

Evaluation

Participation in discussion sessions.
Participation in group sessions.
Completion of both Historical Artifacts worksheets.
For extension, completion of worksheets and assessment of essay.



Attachments

PowerPoint Slides

<p style="text-align: center;">Political Activism Through Music</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">JOHN BROWN'S ENTRANCE INTO HELL.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>When Plato heard old Brown was hung, Old Tophet with Hosannas rung; For well they knew the lying thief, Would make for them an honored chief.</p> </div> <div style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"> <p>Click on the bracket to zoom in on each stanza.</p> </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <p>Not long, indeed, for him they wait, For soon he thunder'd at the gate. "Come in," says Plato, "Quickly come, You're welcome to your fiery home."</p> </div> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Come gentle muse and touch a strain, Twill echo back the sound again— On scenes that pass'd we now must dwell, When old John Brown arrived in Hell.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BACK</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">When Plato heard old Brown was hung, Old Tophet with Hosannas rung; For well they knew the lying thief, Would make for them an honored chief.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BACK</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Brown to receive they now prepare, All eager in the joy to share; Old Satan from his throne came down And left his seat for Old John Brown</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BACK</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Not long, indeed, for him they wait, For soon he thunder'd at the gate. "Come in," says Plato, "Quickly come, You're welcome to your fiery home."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BACK</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Three cheers roll'd forth in accents brief To hail the Abolition chief— Old John chim'd in, and thank the Fates— He'd safely passed the pearly gates.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BACK</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">While Arnold held him by the hand, Old Satan took the Speaker's stand— "Silence," cried he, "Now all sit down, And hear me welcome brother Brown."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BACK</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8</p>



Learning with Lincoln Institute

Sponsored by Teaching with Primary Sources at
Eastern Illinois University and
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
Endorsed by the
Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
TEACHING WITH
**PRIMARY
SOURCES**



<p>9</p> <p>You're welcome, John, to your reward, You've cheated Riddle and the Lord— Though partly gates wide open flew, They did not catch my servant true.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BACK</p>	<p>10</p> <p>As oft you've murdered, lied and stole, It did rejoice my burning soul; You've run your length in earth's career, And we are pleased to see you here.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BACK</p>
<p>11</p> <p>You'll take your seat at my left hand, Why I do this you'll understand; Be not surprised, when I tell you, Old Abraham is coming too.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BACK</p>	<p>12</p> <p>There on my right, that vacant chair, Long since for him I did prepare— And soon I know that he will come— His earthly race is almost run.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BACK</p>
<p>13</p> <p>John at my left, Abe at my right, We'll give the heavenly hosts a fight; A triune group we then shall be, Yes, three in one and one in three.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BACK</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Abe's Cabinet, 'tis very true, Will soon knock here as loud as you— In short, the negroizing clan, Are traveling here unto a man.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BACK</p>
<p>15</p> <p>I shall protest, most long and loud, 'Gainst taking in the motley crowd— For well I know they'd me dethrone, And swear that Tophet was their own.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BACK</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Let Sumner, Stevens, and their host, When they on earth give up the ghost— Unto a lower hell appear; We have no room for them up here.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BACK</p>



Learning with Lincoln Institute

Sponsored by Teaching with Primary Sources at Eastern Illinois University and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
Endorsed by the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission



<p>The Clergy, too, I much do fear. Attraction's law will draw them here— Their earthly teachings—though I tell, Are doctrines long since preached in hell.</p> <p>17 BACK</p>	<p>They, too, must find a lower home, For hither sure they shall not come— We are crowded now in every spot, Save here and there a vacant lot.</p> <p>18 BACK</p>
<p>These I've reserved through all our fights, For those who have pre-emption rights; That corner lot's for Backbone Tod, A renegade accursed of God.</p> <p>19 BACK</p>	<p>The traitor here from his own place Can view the scenes at Fortress Chase— Laugh at the woes of his old friends, Till his curs'd life in horror ends.</p> <p>20 BACK</p>
<p>There's other traitors I could tell, They are too mean to come to hell— So let each go and hunt his hole, For green backs here won't pay their toll.</p> <p>21 BACK</p>	<p>And now, O! John, on earth oppress'd, You are with us a welcome guest; On earth you played our part full well, So now with us forever dwell.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">C. T. A., Printer.</p> <p>22 BACK</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Citations</p> <p style="font-size: small; text-align: center;">John Brown's entrance into hell. C. T. A. Printer. Balt. March, 1863. Library of Congress: American Memory: America Singing: Nineteenth-Century Song Sheets. <http://memory.loc.gov/llc/amss/cw2/cw20034a/001a.tif></p> <p>23</p>	



Learning with Lincoln Institute

Sponsored by Teaching with Primary Sources at Eastern Illinois University and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
Endorsed by the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission



“Thinking About Songs As Historical Artifacts”



The LIBRARY of CONGRESS

Thinking About Songs

AS HISTORICAL ARTIFACTS

	ILLUSTRATION	LYRICS	MUSIC
Looking at THE SONG	<i>Look at the physical format and graphical elements. What do you see?</i>	<i>What people, places, and events are mentioned?</i>	<i>What do you notice about the music (fast, slow, catchy, dull)?</i>
Responding to THE SONG	<i>What are your personal reactions to the images?</i>	<i>What are your personal reactions to the lyrics?</i>	<i>What emotions might this song produce when sung or played?</i>
Thinking about HISTORY	<i>Why do you think the artist(s) wrote this song? What clues do you find to suggest this?</i> <i>For what audience was the song written?</i> <i>Why is the music important to this song?</i> <i>What does the song tell you about what life was like during this period in history?</i>		

WHAT MORE DO YOU WANT TO KNOW, AND HOW CAN YOU FIND OUT?