

Dear Teacher:

Welcome to *New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music*, an exhibition organized by the Smithsonian Institution's Museum on Main Street program and brought to you by your state humanities council. These materials and activities were compiled to help your students observe, encounter, participate, and learn about American roots music during their visit to the exhibition.

The lesson plans that accompany *New Harmonies* will help you create a meaningful experience for your students. Each lesson includes **Pre-visit**, **Visit**, and **Post-visit** activities, designed for in grades 8-12. All the lessons can be adapted for younger or older audiences, so evaluate each lesson before selecting activities for your students.

The **Pre-visit** step is designed to be simple, to introduce the students to the exhibit topic, and to be easy to implement. This step is intended to stimulate the students' curiosity in the exhibit topic and help students gather information for use in visit and post-visit activities. Prior to your arrival at the museum, please check with your local host organization to find out more information on the exhibition and logistical details for your visit.

The **Visit** step is focused on information gathering. This is a time for the students to explore and read the exhibit content, enjoy audio samples, and utilize interactive components. The activity worksheets included in this section will help students gather enough information to apply their knowledge in a later classroom activity. With all activities and worksheets, students can work individually or in groups.

The **Post-visit** step consists of ideas and activities to implement after your return to the classroom. The post-visit step involves higher-level thinking skills such as interpretation, synthesis, thinking hypothetically, and/or expressing judgment. Through these experiences, students will gain a deeper understanding of the topic "American roots music."

While it's desirable to participate in the pre-visit, visit, and post-visit steps, it's certainly not required. In fact, each individual lesson will provide your students with thought-provoking questions and activities. You can easily customize lessons or even develop your own methods of exploring roots music!

Please share with us your opinions about the effectiveness of these educational activities for *New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music*. Please take a few minutes to complete the following evaluation form and mail it to MoMS-SITES at P.O. Box 37012, MRC 941, Washington, DC 20013-7012.

Thank you!  
The Museum on Main Street Team

**Museum on Main Street**  
***New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music***  
**Lesson Plans**  
**Teacher Evaluation & Comments**

Thank you for taking a moment to give us your feedback on the lesson plans for *New Harmonies: Celebrating America Roots Music*. Your comments and suggestions helps us develop these and future teacher materials for Museum on Main Street exhibitions. *Please submit one evaluation for each lesson used.*

Grade Level(s) taught:

Lesson Used:

- Getting to Know the Songs of American Roots Music*
- American Roots Music: The Big Picture*
- Lyrics and Motion in Action!*
- The Impact of Recording Music*
- Musicians of American Roots Music*
- The Future of American Roots Music*

Which activities did you follow? Select all that apply:

- Pre-visit                       Visit                                       Post Visit

What aspect of this lesson did you find most beneficial for your students?

Please describe any adjustments that you made to this lesson.

What aspect of this lesson did you find the least beneficial for your students?

How did your students respond to this lesson?

To what extent were the lesson activities helpful in your students' understanding of American roots music?

- Very                       Moderately                       Somewhat                       Not at all

How did your students respond to the Museum on Main Street exhibition?

How did your students respond to the accompanying local exhibition?

Additional thoughts/comments?

MAIL to:            MoMS-SITES at P.O. Box 37012, MRC 941, Washington, DC 20013-7012.

We encourage teachers to share any lesson plans they might have developed as part of their participation in the *New Harmonies* exhibition and related programs. Please forward your lessons to [davispr@sites.edu](mailto:davispr@sites.edu). Lesson plans will be posted on the Museum on Main Street web site at [www.museumonmainstreet.org](http://www.museumonmainstreet.org).

## Contents

### LESSON 4: THE IMPACT OF RECORDING MUSIC

#### Lesson Objectives (suggested grade levels: 8-12)

In this lesson, students will research various types of roots music and identify the instruments used in various musical styles. Students will apply this knowledge to create an exhibition or written assignment on the history of music communication and production.

#### National Standards

##### *Social Studies:*

**Time, Continuity, & Change:** Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *the ways human beings view themselves in and over time*.

**Culture:** Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.

**People, Places & Environments:** Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, place, and environments.

##### *English Language Arts:*

Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.

Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g. libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.

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### Pre-visit

Worksheet 1: *Is Music Part of Your Life?*

### Visit

Worksheet 2: *Sacred Songs*

Worksheet 3: *Country*

Worksheet 4: *Blues*

Worksheet 5: *Dance*

Worksheet 6: *Instruments Used in Roots Music*

**Post-visit**

Activity 1: *Build an Exhibition: Music Communication and Production*

## LESSON 5 MUSICIANS OF AMERICAN ROOTS MUSIC

### Lesson Objectives (suggested grade levels: 8-12)

In this lesson, students will be able to identify important American roots music musicians and compare and contrast present-day popular music with American roots music.

### National Standards

#### *Social Studies:*

**Culture:** Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.

**Time, Continuity, & Change:** Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *the ways human beings view themselves in and over time*.

**People, Places & Environments:** Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, place, and environments.

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### Pre-visit

Worksheet 1: *A Music Interview: Do You Remember?*

Worksheet 2: *Name That Tune!*

### Visit

Worksheet 3: *Describe Your Musician*

**Post-visit**

Activity 1: *Test Your Knowledge!*

Activity 2: *Who Am I?*

## LESSON 6

### THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN ROOTS MUSIC

#### Lesson Objectives (suggested grade levels: 8-12)

In this lesson, students will develop an understanding of the history of American Roots Music and to develop a post-1990 exhibit panel.

#### National Standards

##### *Social Studies:*

**Culture:** Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.

**Time, Continuity & Change:** Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the ways human beings view themselves in and over time.

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### Pre-visit

Worksheet 1: *What Music Do You Listen To?*

### Visit

Worksheet 2: *Sacred Songs*

Worksheet 3 *Country Music*

Worksheet 4: *Blues*

Worksheet 5: *Dance*

Worksheet 6: *Revival and the Themes of American Roots Music*

**Post-visit**

Activity 1: *What's Next?*

Activity 2: *Be an Exhibition Curator*