

Lesson 2: Musical Styles

National Standard:

Content Standard 6.0: students will listen to, analyze and describe music.

Learning Objective:

Students will be able to

- identify various styles of American music and cite well known musicians associated with them.
- identify and describe music by specific soul music artists from Stax Recording Studio

Materials:

CD Rom with song clips for Lesson 2: Style
Student Activity Sheet

Teaching Procedures:

1. Play “Please Don’t Go” by John Lee Hooker (Track 5), or one of the other song clips from the CD.
 - Take a class survey asking, “What do you hear?”
 - Make a list of the answers.
 - Play the song clip again to confirm what the class heard.
 - Direct the class to consider that while pieces of music may share characteristics, they will have a “style” that most appropriately describes it. Ask, “What musical style would you assign this piece and why?”
2. Hand out student activity sheet: **Style Chart** (two versions, see below: standard lesson with five styles or extended lesson with eight styles) Five-style chart recommended for 45 min. time frame.
 - Students read out loud the characteristics listed in each style column.
 - Look at the Blues column and compare characteristics here to the ones students listed during the warm up listening activity. Fill in artist and song title (John Lee Hooker/Please Don’t Go) at the bottom of the column.
 - Play a listening game directing students to select a partner, listen while the song clips are played, put the number of each song clip next to any musical characteristics they hear. Numbers can be in any column.
 - Following each listening example, students decide which “style” is a “best fit” for each song clip heard. Write the Stax artist and song title at the bottom of the assigned style column.
3. Students share answers with the class and support why this is a “best fit”.

Indicators of success:

Students will correctly identify various style characteristics and musical styles.

Lesson 2: Style

Teacher Resources

Gospel

Musical elements

- lead vocal and chorus
- incorporates the “shout”
- hand clapping, foot stomping, thigh slapping as accompaniment
- groups of various sizes
- lyrics tell a story based on a sacred text
- improvisation
- verse and refrain structure
- highly ornamented melodies
- call and response

Historical notes

The 1920’s was the beginning of the “gospel era”, but the musical style, based on hymns and spirituals of the African American church has been around since the 19th century. Gospel songs first appeared in print in 1874. The tradition of improvisation, call and response, story telling and spontaneity heard in sermons at black churches became a part of gospel music with its passionately sung sacred text.

The 1920’s added a piano accompaniment to the a cappella choir sound. In the 1930’s Thomas A. Dorsey (called the Father of Gospel Music) wrote and published over 500 gospel songs, bringing the music to a vast audience. Early performers of gospel music were Mahalia Jackson, Clare Ward, Marion Williams, the Gospel Harmonettes and the Soul Stirrers. These singers used the techniques of sliding into different pitches, using repetitive phrases and bending notes and rhythms, while singing church related songs.

In the 1930’s and 1940’s there was the advent of gospel radio stations and an increase in the type and number of performing groups. Gospel choirs encouraged use of tambourine, triangle, percussion and later added electric guitar, horns, bass and organ. In the 1950’s, television began to show interest in gospel music and gospel singers began to appear in jazz festivals. The 1950’s and 1960’s brought a harder style to the music, the lead voice becoming more expressive and highly ornamented, with the top notes soaring over the choir. This led to the 1960’s and the beginnings of “soul” when gospel performers such as Aretha Franklin, Sam Cooke, Ray Charles, Sam and Dave, Isaac Hayes, James Brown, The Staple Singers and Marvin Gaye changed sacred lyrics to secular ones.”

Songs for listening, comparison and analysis

Wade in the Water - The Stars of Virginia (Track 7)

Blues

Musical elements

12 bar blues form - the length of the standard blues song with three, four bar phrases
 phrase 1 and 2 usually the same, phrase 3 different
 predominantly major, with flatted 3rd and 7th notes (the “blue notes”)
 words reflected the times
 improvisation
 bending and sliding notes
 I7 IV7 I7 V7 IV7 I7 chord structure

Historical notes

Originating in the American south, the blues came from field hollers, shouts, work and game songs of African slaves, and often reflected the hard work and suffering they endured. In the 1920’s the “country” blues style developed with a performer accompanying himself on an acoustic guitar. (You can hear the percussive use of the guitar and improvisational vocal style on John Lee Hooker’s “Please Don’t Go”.) Originally, women, such as Ma Rainey, Mamie Smith and Bessie Smith, performed the “classic” or “city” blues. It was a smoother and more refined version of the country blues and reflected the experiences of blacks in urban areas. In the 1930’ s and 1940’s, as the nation became more industrialized and workers moved north, the songs and lyrics that came with them became more urbanized. Although the blues began as a vocal tradition, instrumental versions followed the same form and chord structure and used techniques to mimic vocal inflections such as “bending” notes and improvising.

Songs for listening, comparison and analysis

Please Don’t Go - John Lee Hooker (Track 5)

Country

Musical elements

guitar accompaniment most common, along with banjo, violin, harmonica
 blues guitar styles - bending notes and sliding from on to another
 a-b verse/refrain form common
 lyrics usually tell a story, often about love or hardship
 vocals use bending and sliding techniques

Historical notes

Country music is a combination of folk songs from the Southeast and cowboy music from the West. Add to that, influences from blues, jazz, swing, honky tonk and pop and you have what we call “country and western music.” Songs most often have a singer or group of singers accompanied by strings: either acoustic or electric guitar, banjo, violin or harmonica.

Jimmie Rodgers and members of the Carter family became founders of country music when they cut their first records in 1927. Along with them, the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Tennessee had been putting country singers on its stage from 1925, where they introduced most of the great country singers to the American public. In the 1930's and 1940's cowboy films brought the "singing cowboys" like Gene Autry and Roy Rogers to our attention. Hank Williams and his dobro guitar added a new sound in the 1940's. Swing music from Texas integrated itself into the country sound and a popular dance step was created.

Songs for listening, comparison and analysis

Don't Let the Green Grass Fool You - O. B. McClinton (Track 10)

Doo Wop

Musical elements

- unique range of voices - lead, falsetto/1st tenor, 2nd tenor, baritone
- vocal groups with lead singer and harmonization
- nonsense syllables used to enhance vocal line, accompany melody and add percussive effect
- merged elements of pop, gospel, blues, jazz and swing
- bass lines became more complex pattern of nonsense syllables in later songs
- usually sung a capella
- lyrics often about young love
- melody lines usually simple

Historical notes

In the late 1940's and early 1950's a form of singing emerged with a combination of elements from pop, gospel, blues, jazz and swing music. This style used nonsense syllables to imitate instrumental accompaniments and provide rhythmic beat patterns and harmonic accompaniments for the vocal solo lines. Without money for instruments, the singers substituted their voices for instrument sounds. They were known as Doo Wop groups and were an off shoot of gospel vocal groups. Two of the first Doo Wop groups, the Ravens and The Orioles were soon joined by many more. Revival groups exist today, i.e. Boys II Men and their "In the Still of the Night", and other artists who continue to cover songs from this era.

Songs for listening, comparison and analysis

What Can It Be? - The Astors (Track 9)

Rhythm and Blues:

Musical elements

- often 12 bar blues form
- improvisation
- bending and sliding notes
- “blue notes”
- rhythm accents on beats two and four = backbeat
- call and response
- added horn section
- “fills” used to finish out measures
- “breaks” used to hand phrases or improvisation off to other instruments
- bass line often moves under the rhythm section in a repeated pattern

Historical notes

Blues songs, combined with the urban sounds of jazz and the addition of drums, electric guitar, bass, harmonica and piano gave us “rhythm and blues.” This new term was created to replace what up until the 1950’s white record producers had called “race music” which was used to refer to gospel, blues and jazz.

There were unique rhythm and blues styles depending on what part of the country you were in. The Memphis Sound was distinguished by amplified guitar, piano, drums and horns (trumpets and saxophones), use of the ninth chord and rarely using the guitar as a percussion instrument. Memphis was the home of Stax Records with artists such as Sam and Dave, Carla and Rufus Thomas, Eddie Floyd, The Mar-Keys, Booker T. and the M. G.’s.

Songs for listening, comparison and analysis:

Cause I Love You - Carla and Rufus Thomas (Track 8)

Soul

Musical elements -

- call and response
- shout
- improvisation
- secular lyrics
- rhythm accents on beats two and four = backbeat
- lyrics were about real life
- use of horn section
- uncomplicated bass line follows chord structure
- 8 and 16 bar phrases more common
- vocal gospel style, but with secular lyrics
- instrumental “break” - different instruments take a turn at improvising the melody

Historical notes -

Fusing together the vocal styles of gospel, the compositional and instrumental styles of rhythm and blues, greater emphasis on recording techniques as part of

the process and the influence of the civil rights movement gave birth to soul music. Motown Records dominated the music industry in the north with a more refined, rehearsed sensibility with carefully chosen selections and more mainstream arrangements. Motown brought musicians like the Supremes, the Temptations, Marvin Gaye and Stevie Wonder to the international scene.

Drawing on the blues, black church music and a hint of country western; Stax Records in Memphis dominated the music industry in the south during the 1960's and early 1970's. The Memphis sound was distinctively more "gritty, raw, stripped down soul music". Key elements in the sound were gospel style singing, Steve Cropper's guitar style and the "Stax horn sound". The horns acted as a rhythmic accent that accompanied the vocal line. They were hard hitting and rhythmically united with the trumpets and saxophones moving together. At times, they acted like background vocal to the lead voice. Booker T. and the M. G.'s, the house band at Stax, included two blacks and two whites. This unique blending of talents created the "Memphis sound" and helped establish Stax Records as an integrated company during the era of the civil rights movement. Other Stax hit makers were Rufus Thomas, Carla Thomas, Sam and Dave, the Staple Singers, Otis Redding and Isaac Hayes.

Songs for listening, comparison and analysis:

Soul Man - Sam and Dave (Track 2)

Jazz

Musical elements

- improvisation
- syncopated rhythms
- extended forms
- blues notes
- non-tempered scale intervals
- scat singing

Historical notes

Jazz developed in the United States at the end of the 19th century. It is an authentic American art form. From its earliest days jazz has gone through many transformations, taking ideas from other musical forms and adapting them to suit the performers needs. There are many types of jazz, including New Orleans Blues, Ragtime, Boogie Woogie, Dixieland, Chicago Jazz, Kansas City Style, Swing, Bop, Progressive, Cool and Modern. Important elements of jazz are the rhythm, blues harmonies and improvisation. The performer is free to improvise on a melody or add a new one within the framework of the harmony and rhythm being played by the group. Groups vary in size and make up, depending on the type of jazz being performed.

Songs for listening, comparison and analysis

You Don't Know Like I Know - Isaac Hayes

Funk

Musical elements

- accented the first beat
- syncopated rhythms
- loose structures
- extended improvisations
- guitar used to accent rhythms and create “funk” sound
- wah wah pedal - widely used in the guitar rhythms
- electric guitar was well suited to provide new sounds heard in funk music

Historical notes

With the 1970's came a powerful, slamming, gritty sound called “Funk”. It's dance beat definitely moved away from the backbeat of rhythm and blues and soul to a heavy emphasis on beat one. James Brown and his “Outta Sight” is generally credited with introducing us to funk. It is meant for dancing and didn't have to stick to conventional verse-chorus-verse structures. Funk is a combination of blues, rock n roll, jazz and soul.

Songs for listening, comparison and analysis

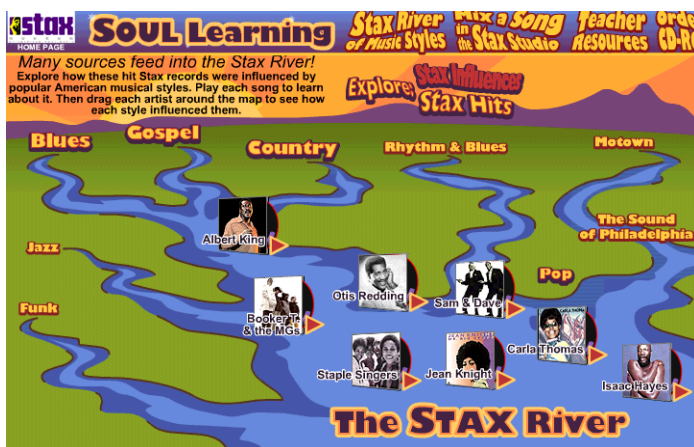
Holy Ghost (part 1) - the Bar-Kays (Track 6)

Lesson 2: Style

Web Activity: Stax River of Music Styles

To extend student learning, the CD-Rom also includes a computer interactive with guided listening examples from Stax Records artists. There are two sections to this interactive: *Explore Stax Influences*, and *Explore Stax Hits*. In each section, playing a song will display vocabulary words and descriptors relating to the song. Songs in the *Explore Stax Hits* section will also display a “map” of key elements for listening. As the song plays, sections with the descriptors are highlighted.

A printable version of the text in this computer interactive is provided below.



The Stax River of Music Styles: Available on the CD-ROM and on the Web at www.staxmuseum.org/soul_learning/

Explore Stax Influences

Gospel: Stars of Virginia, Wade in the Water
 verse and refrain structure
 gospel lead voice with chorus
 high, ornamented notes over the top voices
 sacred lyrics

Blues: John Lee Hooker, Please Don't Go
 blues guitar accompaniment -note bending
 country blues style vocal
 12 bar blues form
 percussive guitar style to provide rhythm

Country: O. B. McClinton, Don't Let the Green Grass Fool You
 verse/refrain form
 slide guitar
 bending notes

Rhythm & Blues: Carla & Rufus, Cause I Love You
 gritty blues vocal by Rufus
 call and response
 rhythm and blues backbeat on drums

Jazz: Isaac Hayes, You Don't Know Like I Know
 improvisation
 extended form without concern about length
 syncopated rhythms

Funk: Bar-Kays, Holy Ghost
 electric guitar tremolo effects
 emphasis on beat one
 syncopated rhythms
 vocal shouting, sliding and falsetto

Pop/Motown/Sound of Philadelphia: Dramatics, What You See Is What You Get
 Latin feel groove
 polished harmony in vocals
 orchestral accompaniment

Explore Stax Hits

Mr. Big Stuff, Jean Knight

This song gives us an example of a **solo voice** with a **back up group** using syllables for harmonization.

Listen and find examples of the “rhythm and blues” **backbeat** used in the percussion parts. The verse at the beginning of the excerpt gives a good example of what a **horn riff** sounds like.

Find the **instrumental break** in the last half of the first refrain. (section 2)

Verse	Refrain	Verse	Refrain	Coda
8 measures	8 measures	8 measures	8 measures	4 measures
Verse with solo and backup singers provide syllables and harmony Horn riffs	Refrain with voices in 1 st half and instrumental break in 2 nd half. Drum fill leading to next verse	Verse with solo and backup singers provide syllables and harmony Horn riffs	Refrain with voices in 1 st half and instrumental break in 2 nd half. Drum fill leading to next verse Percussion backbeat	Fades out as the refrain extends to the end.

Fa fa fa fa fa fa (Sad Song), Otis Redding

Otis Redding taught this song to the instrumentalists by singing the syllables. Stax musicians often learned the “**head parts**” in this manner.

Introduction	Verse	Refrain	Verse
8 measures	8 measures	8 measures	8 measures
horns start echoed by the voice using syllables as in the gospel call and response	singer with piano, bass percussion	singer with piano, bass percussion and horns sometimes horns harmonize with voice other times voice punches out certain words and horns imitate in call and response	singer alternates with horns on syllables in call and response horns accent the sounds in imitation of the voice

I’ll Take You There, The Staple Singers

The Staple Singers were extraordinary gospel singers who show how they could combine their **gospel vocal style** with rhythm and blues, jazz and a touch of “**Reggae**” to create this great soul song.

Listen to the **bass line** that repeats throughout the song. Hear solo **licks** by electric guitar in the refrain. The **harmonica** improvised through the refrain. **Ornamented** notes over the top vocal sounds remind us of gospel style singing.

Refrain	Refrain	Extended refrain
8 measures	8 measures	8+ measures
Solo voice answered by chorus Bass line pattern is prominent throughout Horn line heard throughout	Solo licks on electric guitar Jazz influenced improvisation by the singers Harmonica in a blues style	Gospel style vocals Improvisation Ornamented notes over the top voices

Theme from Shaft, Isaac Hayes

The **orchestral** sounds of *Theme from Shaft* give us examples of how Isaac Hayes used “funk” and “soul” to compose his movie theme. He makes use of **newer technology**, using the **wah wah pedal** right from the beginning of the piece. He stretches the melodic ideas out and doesn’t keep to an eight or twelve bar structure. Listen to the emphasis on beat number **one** and the **syncopated** rhythms.

32 bar extended beginning			
8 measures	8 measures	8 measures	8 measures
Percussion solo	Flutes with theme fragment	Wah wah on measure 18	Long held chord with instrumental group
Electric guitar	Wah wah pedal	Large group on chords, horn riffs	
Bass guitar	Horns with theme fragment		
Wah wah pedal			

Soul Man, Sam and Dave

Soul Man was and still is a hit, being sung by Sam and Dave, again in the movie “The Blues Brothers” and by many others. Listen for **gospel style singing with shouts** included, **note bending** guitar licks, voices and horns speaking back and forth to one another in **call and response** and in those great rhythm parts in the bass and rhythm guitar.

Introduction	Verse	Refrain	Verse
8 measures	8 measures	8 measures	8 measures
Guitar solo	Solo voice	Vocal duet	Rhythm and bass sections bring back the prominent groove from verse 1
Percussion	Rhythm and bass sections play throughout verse	Gospel style singing	
Horns and rhythm section enter on measure 5		Gospel shout	
		Repetitive phrases	
		Guitar fills on high ornamented notes,	Guitar licks use blues style note bending
		Voices and horns in call and response	

That's What the Blues Is All About, Albert King

This song definitely has blues elements but is not in traditional 12 bar blues form. Listen for the **blues style guitar** and **three phrases** in the refrain, which is like a traditional blues song.

Introduction	Verse	Refrain
4 measures	8 measures	8 measures
Solo blues-style guitar Horns have solo riffs Repetitive rhythm and bass line throughout	Lyrics tell a story Vocal blues style Horns accompany vocal	First 2 lines repeated, the third line is different as in traditional blues, Electric guitar fills

Green Onions, Booker T. & the MGs

In this piece you can hear the **traditional 12 bar blues** pattern in the bass line and different instruments playing the melody above it. Listen in 4 bar groups to hear the chords change and find the 3 phrases.

1 st 12 bars			2 nd 12 bars			3 rd 12 bars		
4 meas.	4 meas.	4 meas.	4 meas.	4 meas.	4 meas.	4 meas.	4 meas.	4 meas.
I chords, 1 st guitar solo, bass pattern lets you hear the changes	IV & I chords	V7, IV & I chords	I chords 2 nd guitar solo bass pattern lets you hear the changes	IV & I chords	V7, IV & I chords	I chords, Organ solo, bass pattern lets you hear the changes	IV & I chords	V7, IV & I chords

B-A-B-Y, Carla Thomas

You can hear influences from **rhythm and blues** in the percussion, **gospel** in the vocal parts and **jazz** in the extended improvisation at the end of the song.

Instrumental Break	Refrain	Verse	Coda
6 measures	8 measures	8 measures	8 measures
Horns prominent Bass solo in measures 5 & 6	Voice slides into notes Call and response	Vocal Horns provide fills, Organ and guitar echo each other	Improvisation Extended ending Strong horn riffs B-A-B-Y spelled out

Lesson 2: Style: Standard Style Chart (Five Styles)

Name _____

Style	Gospel	Blues	Rhythm & Blues	Soul	Funk
Musical Elements	High, ornamented notes over the melody Lead vocal and chorus Sacred lyrics Call & respons, Voices use the shout	Guitar accompaniment Words reflect hardship, work or blue feeling 12 bar structure 3 phrase verse Blues chord progression Flatted 3rds and 7ths, (blue notes) Bend and slide to notes Improvisation	Drum accents on beat 2 and 4 (backbeat) Piano, horns, guitars and drum set with vocals Flatted 3rds and 7ths, (blue notes) Call & response Horns answer voices, (riffs) Improvisation Bass line repeats Verse/refrain 12 bar or 8 bar phrases	Gospel style singing with secular lyrics Drum accents on beat 2 and 4, (backbeat) Piano, horns, guitars and drum set with vocals Call & response Verse/refrain Improvisation Instrumental breaks 8 – 16 bar phrases are more common	Accented 1 st beat Wah wah pedal Shouts and screams in vocals Accents on weak beat (syncopation) Extended or long improvisation Verses or sections of the music can be different lengths Guitar used as rhythm accent
Stax Artists					
Song Title					

Place the following titles and artists in the squares that best match their styles:

- Please Don't Go** – John Lee Hooker
- Soul Man** – Sam & Dave
- Holy Ghost** – The Bar-Kays
- Wade in the Water** – The Stars of Virginia
- Cause I Love You** – Carla & Rufus

Lesson 2: Style: Expanded Style Chart (Eight Styles)

Name _____

Style	Gospel	Blues	Country	Doo Wop	Rhythm & Blues	Soul	Jazz	Funk
<i>Musical Elements:</i>	High ornamented notes over the melody, Sacred lyrics, Lead vocal and chorus, Call & response, Voices use the shout,	Guitar accompaniment 12 bar structure, 3 phrase verse, Blues chord progression, Words reflect hard times, work or blue feelings, Flatted 3rds and 7ths (blue notes) Bend and slide to notes, Improvisation,	Guitar or string accompaniment, Blues style guitar, Verse/refrain, Lyrics often about love or hardship, Vocal uses bend and sliding techniques	Nonsense syllables, Voices in close harmony, Falsetto voice with lead, tenor and baritone, Gospel style quartet, Often a capella	Drum accents on beat 2 and 4 (backbeat) Piano, horns, guitars and drum set with vocals Flatted 3rds and 7ths, (blue notes) Call & response, Horns answer voices (riffs) Improvisation, Bass line repeats, Verse/refrain, 12 bar or 8 bar phrases	Gospel style singing with secular lyrics, Drum accents on beat 2 and 4 (backbeat) Piano, horns, guitars and drum set with vocals Call & response, Verse/refrain, Improvisation, Instrumental breaks, More often 8 – 16 bar phrases,	Accent on the weak beat (syncopation) Extended improvisation, Trading solos, Longer sections, Blues harmonies, Melodies based on Different scales or modes	Accented 1 st beat, Wah wah pedal, Shouts and screams in vocals, Syncopated rhythms, Extended improvisation, Verses or sections of the music can be different lengths, Guitar used as rhythm accent
Stax Artists:								
Song Title:								

Place the following titles and artists in the squares that best match their styles:

1. **Please Don't Go** – John Lee Hooker
2. **Made in the Water** – The Stars of Virginia
3. **Cause I Love You** – Carla & Rufus
4. **Soul Man** – Sam & Dave
5. **What Can It Be?** – The Astors
6. **Don't Let the Green Grass Grow -O. B. McClinton**
7. **You Don't Know Like I Know** – Isaac Hayes
8. **Holy Ghost** – The Bar-Kays