

SOCIAL JUSTICE: PROTEST MUSIC MUSIC WITH A MESSAGE

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SUMMARY

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Students will list some of their favorite songs, read the lyrics, and decide what messages or themes the artists are sending through their music. Partners will share their lists with each other to get to know each other and to start thinking about the meaning behind music lyrics.

GOALS

- Students will list their favorite songs
- Students will read the lyrics and look for topics and themes in the songs.
- Students will learn more about their exchange partner through the songs that they like.

LANGUAGE GOALS

- Students can make statements about their favorite songs and introduce themselves to their partner.
- Students can participate in a discussion about favorite songs and what they mean.

DURATION

2-3 classes

LANGUAGE

English

MATERIALS

Lesson Worksheet: MUSIC WITH A MESSAGE

MEDIA

The students use the established communication channel for the exchange with their partner.

DIFFICULTY



DESCRIPTION

Students will list some of their favorite songs and research the lyrics of the songs. After reading the lyrics, students will decide on what messages or themes the artists are sending through their music. Examples of themes are provided for students. Partners will share their lists with each other to get to know each other and to start thinking about the meaning behind music lyrics.

TEACHER PREPARATION

- Decide on student pairings for exchange partners.
- Print and make copies of the student worksheet for each student or provide students with a digital copy.
- Choose a song to play for the introduction to the lesson

CLASS INTRODUCTION

Play a song that has a clear message while students are entering the room, such as “Am Woman” (Helen Reddy), “Respect” (Aretha Franklin), “A Change Is Gonna Come” (Sam Cooke), “Get Up, Stand Up” (Bob Marley and the Wailers, or any other song with a clear message. Ask students what they hear in the lyrics and what they think the artist’s message is. Then explain that they will complete an activity with their exchange partner about the meaning behind the songs that they listen to. Provide their students information about the procedure, duration, and contents of the project. Explain the task to students and give them the contact information for their partners.

EXCHANGE

Students begin by listing up to ten of their favorite songs. Encourage them to list any songs that they like and not be concerned about ranking them. Next, they will go online and look up the lyrics of the songs they listed. Students will read the lyrics several times and look for common themes or messages that stand out in each song and across the list of songs. They will jot down any words or ideas that they notice and come up with a list of common themes. Students can use the list of examples to help them but can come up with more specific ideas or new themes not listed in the examples. Students will then arrange a meeting with their exchange partner and share their list of songs and themes. This will lead to a discussion about what they notice about each other’s lists and will serve as a way for students to get to know their exchange partner. Lastly, students will choose a song (either from their list or another song) that they want to recommend to their partner. It should be a song that they think their partner should know before visiting their country.

REFLECTION

Students will reflect on what they have learned about their partner as well as what they learned about the messages behind the songs they listen to.

