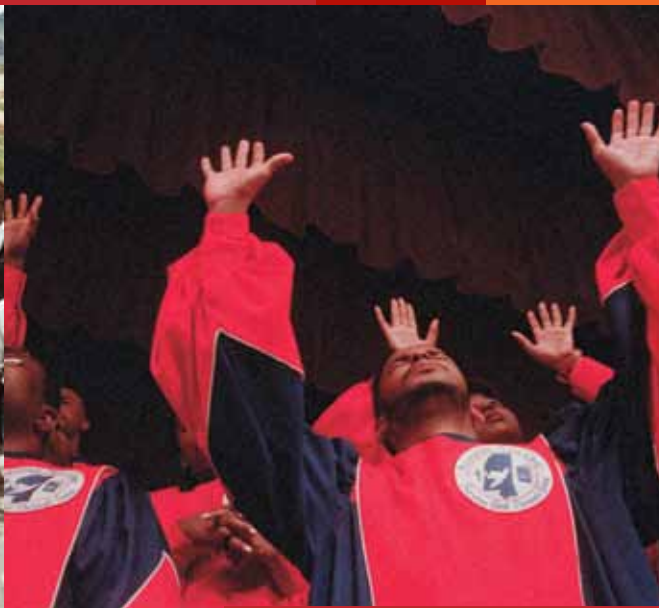


An Educational Program in Support of
*HONOR! A Celebration of the African American
Cultural Legacy* Curated by Jessye Norman



CARNEGIE HALL presents
Perelman American Roots

A Program of The Weill Music Institute at Carnegie Hall

AFRICAN AMERICAN SONG

Uniting Voices

Teacher Guide

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USING YOUR TEACHER GUIDE

The teacher guide for *African American Song: Uniting Voices* includes questions for class discussion. These are indicated throughout the teacher guide in light yellow shading. Please note that these questions do not appear in the student guide.

Information sheets, worksheets, and choral arrangements appear in both the teacher and student versions of *Uniting Voices*. These materials have been indicated with a red square, providing the instructor with the corresponding page number in the student guide (SG).

In this year’s curriculum, we have identified two types of supplements to selected lessons, as detailed below.

MUSICAL EXTENSIONS

These activity ideas are designed for music teachers who are implementing the full curriculum in their own music classrooms or who are helping to bring more music specialty approaches into an arts-integrated learning environment. These ideas emphasize skills-based learning approaches, and provide opportunities for collaboration between classroom teachers and music teachers.

CREATIVE EXPLORATIONS

These activity ideas are designed for Teaching Artists or music specialists whose work supplements that of either social studies or choral classroom teachers. These ideas emphasize hands-on work that gives students a chance to creatively respond to relevant artistic and historical contexts.

Corresponding page number in the student guide (SG), where applicable

Questions to be discussed as a class

Musical Extension

Creative Exploration

SG 1

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PRE-CURRICULUM SURVEY

- How is music a part of your everyday life? _____
- What kinds of ideas are expressed in the music you listen to now? _____
- What are some occasions or events during which people sing? _____
- What does the word *united* mean to you? _____
- Can music unite a group of people or a society? If so, how? If not, why? Give at least one example to support your opinion. _____
- Who or what comes to mind when you think of African American song? _____

LESSON 1: Discovering Unity through Music

AIM: What are our notions and experiences of unity in music, specifically in African and African American music?

OBJECTIVE: Students share their preconceptions of music and African American song as they begin to explore how music can unite people.

STANDARDS: NYS Social Studies—1.3; Blueprint—Making Connections

MATERIALS: Pre-Curriculum Survey (completed), Perelman American Roots, Perelman American Roots CD, computer with internet connection and audio (optional)

PART 1: **Sharing Our Thoughts About Music and Discovering Points of Unity**

- Have students share their responses to the Pre-Curriculum Survey (completed as a homework assignment before this class). Discuss these questions as a class:
 - What are some common beliefs we have about the role of music in our lives?
 - What is our understanding of African American song?
- Document these responses in a manner that will allow the students to continue to add their observations throughout the Perelman American Roots curriculum.

PART 2: **Discovering Unity in African Song**

- At its root, African American song comes from African musical and cultural traditions that continue to be strong to this day.
- Singing is a central element of African cultures. According to some of the first musicologists and historians to observe African societies, Africans were surprised to hear that in other cultures, singing does not involve the participation of everyone present at the event. In Africa, there is no distinction between performers and audiences.
- Many African songs contain simple, memorable melodies. At the same time, there is also a rich tradition of blending different voices in harmony and with intricate rhythms.
- Listen to the Fisk Jubilee Singers sing the Ghanaian song “Mawu Nye Lolo” [Track 1] and complete Part 1 of the Discovering Unity in African Song worksheet.
- As in most cultures, music is an integral part of the African religious experience. Listen to “Africa Anointed” by Limit X, Christafari, and Stitchie [Track 2]. This is a contemporary example of a song about the entire continent of Africa being unified in religious praise. Complete the rest of the Discovering Unity in African Song worksheet.



Ghanaian drummers

MUSICAL EXTENSION

- In keeping with the African ideal of music being participatory, select one of the songs you heard or a song chosen by the students.
- Experiment with tapping along to the beat as a class.
- Try adding a layer of percussion or rhythmic finger-snapping.
- Try humming along with the melody or let volunteers try improvising a vocal harmony.
- How does participating change our experience of the song?

WORKSHEET: Discovering Unity in African Song**PART 1:** Listen to the Fisk Jubilee Singers sing the Ghanaian song "Mawu Nye Lolo."

1. Where do you notice unity in this performance? _____

2. What do you notice about how the singers blend their voices together in this song?
How does their unity allow for individual expression? _____

3. African music also has a strong rhythmic and percussive tradition. What do you notice about the drumming or the finger-snapping in this song? How does it rhythmically relate to the singing? Do we ever hear the percussion or the singing on its own? What does the rhythmic accompaniment add? _____

4. What is similar between this performance and some of the African American music and musicians you have discussed? _____

SG 2

PART 2: As in many cultures, music is an integral part of the African religious experience. Listen to “Africa Anointed” by Limit X, Christafari, and Stitchie. This is a contemporary example of a song about the entire continent of Africa being unified in religious praise.

1. How is the use of percussion and singing similar to or different from “Mawu Nye Lolo”?

2. What is similar between this performance and some of the African American music and musicians you have discussed? _____

SG 3