

Secondary 1

Being Heard: Luthiers and Musicians

Dr. Sarah Gulish

Grade Level/Class

Upper Secondary
50 Minute Music Class

Overall Theme

Musicians and instrument makers are closely connected and work together to adapt to a changing world. Luthiers (guitar makers) utilize responsive creativity to help musicians be heard in ever-changing ensembles and venues and ultimately influence the music they make.

Essential Questions

1. What changes in acoustic guitar manufacturing affect volume, tone, and expression?
2. How has the guitar been used as a vehicle of expression over time?
3. How can we use music to express ourselves?

National Standards

Interpret

MU: Pr4.3.H.IIIa Explain and present interpretations that demonstrate and describe the context (social, cultural, and historical) and an understanding of the creator's intent in the repertoire for varied programs of music that include melodies, repertoire pieces, stylistically appropriate accompaniments, and improvisations in a variety of contrasting styles.

MU: Re8.1.H.IIIa Establish and justify interpretations of the expressive intent and meaning of musical selections by comparing and synthesizing varied researched sources, including references to examples from other art forms.

Analyze

MU: Re7.2.H.IIIa Demonstrate and justify how the structural characteristics function within a variety of musical selections, and distinguish how context (social, cultural, and historical) and creative decisions inform the response.

Connect

MU: Cn10.0.H.IIIa Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music. MU: Cn11.0.T.IIIa Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify concrete examples of collaboration between musicians and luthiers.
2. Describe how instrument manufacturing helped broaden possibilities for expression.
3. Analyze and connect musical performances on guitar with personal preference.
4. Evaluate musical performances based on expressive elements.
5. Describe individual luthier contributions in the field of music.

Materials Needed

1. S1 Presentation
2. S1 Worksheet
3. Writing Utensil

Procedures

Lesson Introduction (10 Min):

- Teacher (T) invites students to reflect on their personal experiences with instruments and musical expression.
- Students (S) fill out the introductory questions.
- T leads the whole class (WC) in a discussion on their answers.

Lesson Activity (30 Min):

- T provides S with a definition of luthier and shares how throughout history, instrument makers and musicians have worked together to create instruments as a vehicle of personal expression.
- T provides one example (The Need to be Heard) and asks S: *"How do luthiers adapt to changing needs?"*
- T asks S to think of a band that they like to listen to. Would it be the same if one or more of the players couldn't be heard above the rest? How would your listening experience be different?
- T shares photographs of guitars to illustrate how luthiers innovated to help guitars compete with louder instruments, like the mandolin and banjo.
- S watches the videos on the Martin Factory and Linda Manzer workshop and answers corresponding questions on their worksheet.
- S listens to oral history clips of Bob Benedetto and Bob Taylor and answers the questions on their worksheets.
- T describes the importance of personal expression in music performance and asks S to share ways in which they believe instrument construction can affect personal expression (For example, a larger instrument body provides opportunities for a greater dynamic range, etc.). T writes S's answers on the board/SmartBoard. T asks students to share personal experiences with instrument capacity and personal expression through the guided worksheet.
- S listen to acoustic guitar performances to watch, analyze, and reflect upon.
- After completing the analysis questions, S breaks into small groups and shares what they learned.

Assessment Strategies

Wrap-up and Assessment (10 Min):

In small, student-selected or teacher-selected groups, invite students to share the answers to their questions and discuss the role of instrument makers in the music industry.

Extensions/Adaptations

- This Lesson Plan has so many possibilities for cross-curricular instruction:
 - STEAM: Take student luthier plans and work on constructing prototypes.
 - Business: Invite students to create a business plan for a new guitar shop and justify their differentiator.
 - Music Performance: Invite students to learn one of the songs from the performance examples and perform on an instrument that is different than the one presented. What do they notice about the difference in Expression?
- When working with small groups, consider doing all of the activities as a group (Oral History Selection, Video Selection, etc.).
- Consider providing simplified questionnaires with visual aids for ELL students.
- Provide alternative assignment options for students with fine motor skill considerations. For example, they could dictate answers or draw on a tablet.
- Use closed captions for videos, and allow text-to-speech for any required readings.
- Allow students to use speech-to-text to dictate their answers rather than writing.
- When using the guided worksheet, provide differentiated work. Some students may only answer half of the questions, others may have one question per page, with 10 pages.
- Provide students with a “think sheet,” where they can write down responses to be able to share out with the small group after watching the acoustic guitar performances.

Spotlight on Careers in Music

This lesson plan can be tied to specific careers in music:

- Luthier
- Repair Technician
- Factory Floor Manager
- Singer/Songwriter
- Composer
- Sound engineer
- Research & Development
- Artist Relations
- Venue Manager
- Stage Manager
- Interviewer

For comprehensive information on careers in the music industry, please visit [Consider a Career in Music](#)