

Message in the Music:
Cultural Narratives of Contemporary China and the United States through Music

U.S.-China Institute Curriculum Project
University of Southern California (USC)

Gina M. Jackson

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Essential Question

Through the medium of contemporary music, how are societal Cultural Narratives defined in China and the United States?

Objectives

- *Utilizing a contemporary musical artist (1970 and beyond) from China and the United States, students will be able to identify and define the elements of Cultural Narratives through the written musical lyrics
- *Through research, students will be able to analyze the societal context in which each artist wrote and created
- *Through critical thinking skills, students will be able to evaluate each artist's biography and analyze how the artists' backgrounds contribute to their societal contextual creativity
- *Students will collaborate to develop the project and enhance teamwork skills

Common Core State Standards (English Language Arts Grades 9/10)

- * 9.10.RI.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text
- * 9-10.RI.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose
- * 9-10.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience

- * 9-10.W.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically
- * 9-10.W.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research
- * 9-10.SL.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task

Daily Lessons

Day #1 – Review of prior studied Cultural Narratives, societal contextual poetry, and primary/secondary sources lessons

-Teacher presentation on the history of China and the United States, specifically covering the 1970's until today

Day #2 – Teacher presentation of the history of contemporary music (1970's until today) in China and the United States, with an emphasis on historical and socially-conscious artists

Days #3 and #4 – Students, in partners, will begin researching (various aspects of the Internet and other texts) artists from each country who align with the prior discussed lessons. They will research the artists, their biographies, their project thematic songs, and the historical context of their music.

Days #5 and #6 – Students will narrow down their selected artists' songs and the specific era/decade in which the songs were written and recorded. They will then begin to analyze the chosen artists and selected songs (two per artist).

Days #7 and #8 – Partners will begin working on the creation of their project. Flexibility will be provided for how they visually present their projects (power point; short film; Art Gallery, etc.).

Days #9 and #10 – Students will present their final projects.

**Throughout each day, daily objectives, discussions, and progress sharing will take place*

Student Assessment

An explicit rubric will define student assessment goals. Such goals will include the following: Research/Process; Writing; Visual Presentation; Verbal Presentation; Articulation of Presented Research Material(s); Defined Sources.

