

WPT Project for 2017 WMEA Music Standards – Leyla Sanyer No. 2 – High School Orchestra

TITLE and title paragraph

Czech-ing Off Another Performance—

We often consider music from other cultures in our classroom study of orchestral literature, but there are similarities between structure and meaning in culture that can resonate with today's students. In examining music from what was once known as Bohemia over three centuries we can discover the meaning of leadership, patriotism, folk art, and community. The orchestra represents a microcosm of society. How do our students fit in that society? How do we prepare them for their future and their role in the world?

Target: High School Orchestra (could be Middle School Orchestra with literature shift possible)

Descriptive Paragraph:

The WPT video used as a basis for this activity guide comes from the 2017 Wisconsin Honors Orchestra performance starting at 23:00. This performance of Dvorak's Slavonic Dance No. 8 was presented with a student ensemble and no conductor. The participants played chamber music in a large ensemble setting. This idea of community and mutual responsibility is important to consider in all settings. A concert can be packed full of great ideas but utilize three great works. By using these three pieces from Czech composers we can examine how community, mutual respect (or lack of it), and reverence for homeland and country impact our lives:

Heinrich Biber (1644-1794) – *Battalia* (string ed. Blahnik; Alliance Publications)
(allegiance leading to war and suffering) Baroque era

Bedrich Smetana (1824-1884) – *Themes from the Moldau* (string arr. Frost; Kendor Publications)
(respect for the environment/community) Nationalistic era

Antonin Dvorak (1841-1904) – *Slavonic Dance No. 8* (full arr. Isaac; Highland Etling)
(use of folk/cultural ideas in new settings) Romantic era

WMEA Music Standards:

This curriculum guide corresponds with the following WMEA Music Standards:

Artistic Process PERFORMING:

Enduring Understandings –

Analyzing creators' context and how they manipulate elements of music provides insight into their intent and informs performance.

Musicians judge performance based on criteria that vary across time, place, and cultures.

The context and how a work is presented influence the audience response.

Performance standard (sample): ANALYZE

Demonstrate, using music reading skills where appropriate, how compositional devices employed and theoretical and structural aspects of musical works impact and inform prepared or improvised performances. MU:Pr4.2.E.1a

Other performance standards to consider:

Select -- MU:Pr4.1.E.IIa

Interpret -- MU:Pr4.3.E.IIIa

Rehearse, Evaluate, and Refine -- MU:Pr5.1.E.8a

Present -- MU:Pr6.1.E.8a

Artistic Process: RESPOND :

Enduring Understandings –

Individuals' selection of musical works is influenced by their interests, experiences, understandings, and purposes.

Response to music is informed by analyzing context (social, cultural, and historical) and how creators and performers manipulate the elements of music.

Through their use of elements and structures of music, creators and performers provide clues to their expressive intent.

Performance standard (sample): SELECT

Apply criteria to select music for specified purposes, supporting choices by citing characteristics found in the music and connections to interest, purpose, and context. MU:Re7.1.E.1a

Other performance standards to consider:

Analyze – MU:Re7.2.E.8a

Interpret – MU:Re8.1.E.IIa

Evaluate -- MU:Re9.1.E.8a

Artistic Process: CONNECT :

Enduring Understandings –

Musicians connect their personal interests, experiences, ideas, and knowledge to creating, performing, and responding.

Understanding connections to varied contexts and daily life enhances musicians' creating, performing, and responding.

Other performance standards to consider:

Personalize -- MU:Cn10.1.E.IIb-WI

Broaden -- MU:Cn11.1.E.Ic-WI

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The area that is now known as the Czech Republic has seen many changes and influences since the time that Biber so eloquently expressed concern over the diverse and divergent communities of the 1600s. In an effort to understand how politics and culture have shaped the growth and conflict of this part of the world, students will also grow to understand their own culture and society better. Biber chose to demonstrate his understanding of the world through the Baroque suite. Smetana used the mighty Moldau River, from its birth in a spring to winding through his country out to sea, to express growth and the shifting of life. Dvorak borrowed rhythms from his culture but created completely new folk melodies that became part of the popular culture.

GETTING STARTED:

- Watch the WPT video of the 2017 Wisconsin Honors Orchestra starting at 23:00 – Dvorak
- Discuss how a student orchestra could operate without a conductor
- Using a piece of music already studied, rehearse without a conductor

STRATEGIES:

- Introduce the Biber and compare to other Baroque suites
- Look at techniques that were unique to that time period – how do they emphasize the unique qualities of each performer and composer
- Discuss why there are 7 folks songs in the second movement
- Compare the idea of performers playing these songs at the same time to multiple people rapping or reciting poetry – how do you express what you think so others will hear you? What does it mean to be a patriot?
- Why does the piece end with a slow movement?
- In studying the Themes from the Moldau, examine how you feel about your own neighborhood, city, state or part of the country.
- What techniques are necessary to accomplish the feeling of growth? Consider dynamics, balance, bow distribution, vibrato, rhythmic change and theoretical understandings.
- What does it mean to have pride in one's country or region? How does music share pride without damaging relationships?

- Examine leadership in an orchestral setting? Can someone lead from the inside or back of a section? How does this concept of communal work as opposed to competition compare to other places in life...family, government, work settings?
- Did Dvorak value the music from his country more than his own ideas? Listen to parts of the New World Symphony written while the composer was living in the United States. How does Dvorak pay homage to American folk influences...Native American and African American in a way that fooled some into thinking he was quoting American music?
- Watch the WPT video of Respighi's Pines of Rome to listen to how the Italian composer depicts growth and arrival.
- Consider a concert with multi-media work using history on a screen. Include student conductors or one piece/section without conductor, since Baroque music is often performed without a conductor. Include student reflections in the written program. Consider the addition of an American spiritual to show the audience how a political message can be masked musically to make a statement without speaking about it.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (Video/Audio/Print):

2017 Wisconsin Honors Orchestra with Steve Amundson on WPT

<https://wisconsinperforms.org/2017-state-honors-orchestra/>

Wisconsin Honors Orchestra performance of Respighi Pines of Rome - WPT

<https://wisconsinperforms.org/pines-of-rome/>

Nationalism in Music

<https://study.com/academy/lesson/nationalism-in-romantic-music-heritage-pride-of-romantic-composers.html>

Interview with Benjamin Zander

<https://www.cnn.com/videos/tv/2016/06/06/exp-quest-means-business-paula-newton-benjamin-zander.cnn>

Interview with Sir Ken Robinson

<https://www.fastcompany.com/1764044/ken-robinson-principles-creative-leadership>

ASSESSMENTS:

Performance – Concert preparation/design, student contributions, reflection

Projects – Maps, timelines, power points and videos to show connections

Discussion – Involvement in classroom discussion, critiques and comparisons

Writing – Response to questions, short writing, 3 x 5 card responses