

Boys Discovering Their World Through Current Events

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Structure of Today's Presentation

1. Theory & Rationale
2. Action Research
3. Conclusions
4. Workshop Activity
5. Discussion / Q&A

Part 1: Theory & Rationale

Art as a catalyst for critical thinking



Image courtesy of Google Images

Developing critical thinking skills is a necessary first step to nurture an informed citizenry. Calls for social justice can emerge only from an informed population.

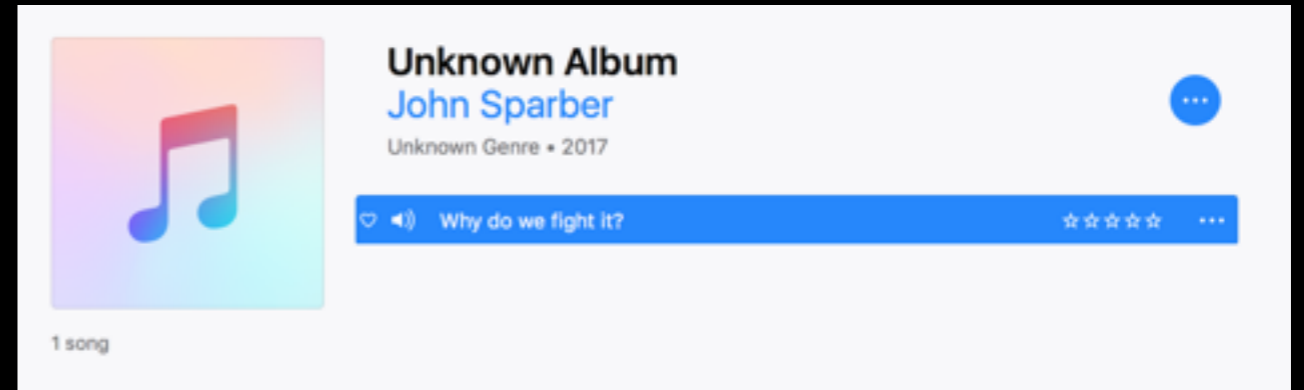
Zwirn & Libresco, 2010, p. 31

Part 1: Theory & Rationale

Authentic assessment



- *Performers with acquired knowledge
- *Real-world applications



- *Synthesis & application of knowledge and skills
- *Sum is greater than distinct parts



- *Feedback loop
- *Dynamic (not static) process

"It grew my capabilities because it expanded what I thought I could do and surpassed my expectations."

- *The assessment itself is integral to learning

Part 2: Action Research

How we implemented the project
& what we learned

Learning Objectives:

- *To bridge knowledge across two disciplines
- *To become more knowledgeable about a current event
- *To examine how music can be used as a force for change
- *To gain insight into the similarities and differences between writing genres
- *To gain an understanding of how you, as an artist, make choices to create meaning
- *To become more efficient at expressing your thoughts
- *To employ metaphor to add another layer of meaning
- *To apply musical composition skills you learned this year

Part 2: Action Research

How we implemented the project
& what we learned



Images courtesy of Google Images



Part 2: Action Research

How we implemented the project
& what we learned

Essential Questions:

What are the signs and symptoms of an emerging dystopia?

What is the role and responsibility of a citizen
when society takes a turn for the worse?

What avenues of dissent are constructive/destructive?



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Part 2: Action Research

How we implemented the project
& what we learned

THE FIRST AMENDMENT
CONGRESS SHALL MAKE NO LAW RESPECT-
ING AN ESTABLISHMENT OF RELIGION, OR
PROHIBITING THE FREE EXERCISE THEREOF;
OR ABRIDGING THE FREEDOM OF SPEECH, OR
OF THE PRESS; OR THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE
PEACEABLY TO ASSEMBLE, AND TO PETITION THE
GOVERNMENT FOR A REDRESS OF GRIEVANCES.
PROTECT THE FIRST AMENDMENT, SUPPORT THE CBLDF

Part 2: Action Research

How we implemented the project
& what we learned

Objective:

Identify an issue within a current event about which you are passionate. Write a protest song in response to this issue.

Central tasks:

In social studies class, you will compose your lyrics.
In music class, you will compose the musical track.

Guidelines:

Composed in verse/chorus structure (at least two verses and a repeated chorus).
Written in a rhyme scheme (ex. ABCB).
Contains at least one metaphor.

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Protest Song Rubric				
	D	C	B	A
Lyrics	Message of the piece is unclear. Student has not made the suggested revisions.	The song is clunky and unclear. A lot of cliché lines and phrases. Little to no details from current event. Struggled to use simile and/or metaphor to create meaning. Message is unclear. Little to no revision: a few words changed here and there. Too many spelling and capitalization errors.	The song reads well but could use more flow. Some cliché lines and phrases. Some details linking current event and song. Employed simile and/or metaphor to create effect, but could have crafted language more to enhance message. Evidence of some revision: words and lines changed to improve the song. Some spelling and capitalization errors.	Lyrics are flowing and precise. No cliché phrases except here and there, for effect. Poetic details make current event and song come alive. Employed figurative language adeptly to create deep meaning. Message draws in listener. Evidence of much revision: whole verses or chorus reworked in pursuit of perfect wording. Few spelling or capitalization errors.
Musicality	Piece demonstrates little knowledge and/or inaccurate use of tonality; rhythm and meter; instrumentation; melody and harmony; and the processes of repetition, variation, and contrast.	Piece demonstrates somewhat accurate use of tonality; rhythm and meter; instrumentation; melody and harmony; and the processes of repetition, variation, and contrast.	Piece demonstrates knowledge and mostly accurate use of tonality; rhythm and meter; instrumentation; melody and harmony; and the processes of repetition, variation, and contrast.	Piece demonstrates knowledge and accurate use of tonality; rhythm and meter; instrumentation; melody and harmony; and the processes of repetition, variation, and contrast.

Part 2: Action Research

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Metaphor...

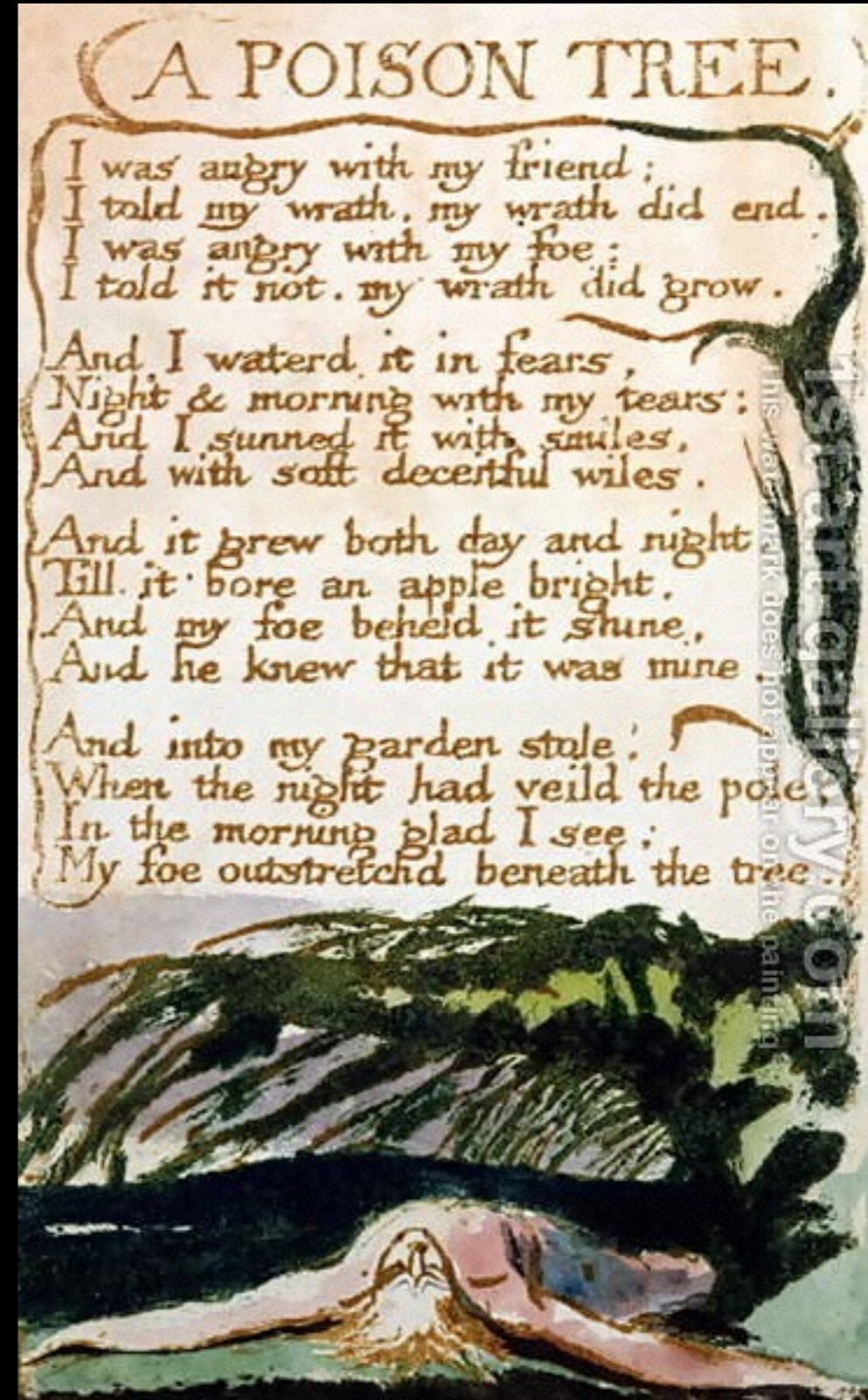


Image courtesy of Google Images

Part 2: Action Research

How we implemented the project
& what we learned

*Tin soldiers and Nixon coming
We're finally on our own
This summer I hear the drumming
Four dead in Ohio*

- Neil Young



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Part 2: Action Research

How we implemented the project
& what we learned



Image courtesy of Google Images

Part 2: Action Research

How we implemented the project
& what we learned

List of resources:

Strange Fruit, Billie Holiday
Oh Freedom, traditional
This is the Sound that Jazz Makes, Carole Boston Weatherford
Soundtrack for a Revolution (2009 documentary)
Woke Up This Morning, Reverend Osby, perf. John Legend
Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around, perf. The Roots
We Shall Overcome, perf. Peter, Paul, and Mary
We Shall Not Be Moved, perf. Mary Mary
Here's the to State of Mississippi, Wyclef Jean
Oh Freedom, perf. Vivian Green
Eyes on the Prize, perf. Joss Stone
This May Be My Last Time, perf. Blind Boys of Alabama
Where Is the Love, Black Eyed Peas
Solidarity Forever, Joe Hill
Dump the Bosses Off Your Back, Joe Hill
The Preacher and the Slave, Joe Hill
Stories and poems from the Wobblies "Little Red Songbook"
Joe Hill, Joan Baez
This Land Is Your Land, Woody Guthrie
Let Freedom Swing: Conversations on Jazz and Democracy
Just Blowing His Horn (handout about Louis Armstrong)

In the Ghetto, Elvis Presley
Blowin' In the Wind, Bob Dylan
Seven O'Clock News/Silent Night, Simon and Garfunkle
Star Spangled Banner, Jimi Hendrix live perf.
Freedom, Richie Havens live perf.
Ohio, Crosby Stills and Nash
Big Yellow Taxi, Joni Mitchell
Born in the USA, Bruce Springsteen
Get Up, Stand Up, Bob Marley and the Wailers
The Singing Revolution (singing revolution in Estonia)
Fear of a Black Planet, Public Enemy
Scarecrow, Melissa Etheridge
Same Love, Macklemore
Eliminating the Elements, (article)
Khafre Jay's "Hip Hop for Change" (TED talk)
Visual arts images: Haring, Ringgold, Banksy, H. W. Thomas, etc.
The Otherside, Macklemore
Amandla! (documentary)
Oxford Town, Bob Dylan
Oakie from Muskogee, Merle Haggard & Roy Edward Burris
Testify, Rage Against the Machine
Rican Beach, Alynda Lee Segarra, perf. Hurray for the Riff Raff

Part 2: Action Research

How we implemented the project
& what we learned

Peer conferencing



Student Examples: Lyrics

*The three empty shells ejected
With smoke drifting off
One more soul floating upwards
After one man's last cough*

-Abraham, "Twitch"

*Blacks getting pulled over by police
The smell of death is in the air
Fair objective procedures?
Our justice system hardly fair*

-Jonah, "Gleaming Light"

*No, there ain't no hate in America
Only the comforting grasp of hysteria
Where people hide behind media
The luminescent curtains, America*

-Sam, "No Hate in America"

*This is no longer the America
That we have come to love
It is now made up of the people
Who like to push and shove*

-Manny, "Respect Each Other"

Student Examples: Music



See Me for Who I Am
Karson



Everybody Has a Voice
Quinn



No Hate In America
Sam



I'm a Black Man
Asaan

Student Examples: Post-Project Reflection

This song shows that I like to make lots of revisions, and that I make those revisions off of new things that I learn.

When I learn a new thing, I combine it with older things I already know to help me comprehend what I am doing.

My first draft is not always my best, so I have to keep editing it to make it better.

It tells me that I learn quickly. Before this I had no knowledge on song writing but I ended up learning fast and received an "A."

Writing this song confirmed that assignments that allow me to utilize my creative side come more natural and I am more motivated. I am better at expressing myself through art instead of written essays and reading assignments.

This song tells me that I sound really weird when I'm singing late at night into a gaming headset.

Um...nothing really particular.

It tells me that I should have gone to see Dr. Willow for help.

I learned that some people never get anything good in their life.

Part 3: Conclusions



The project proved to be an effective catalyst for critical thinking in both social studies class and music class.

It was hard for me to figure out what type of music to write from scratch. We were not able to use pre-made loops because we needed to arrange our own chords, harmony and melody. I solved the problem by asking my teacher for help and just putting music in that sounded good and cool.

Some problems I encountered while writing was creating a unison rhyme scheme. I found it hard to find words that would help my rhyme scheme and still convey my meaning. Also I found that I had to delete and rewrite whole stanzas due to clichés. For rhyme scheme if I couldn't find a word that would fit in and convey my meaning I would change the word that I was trying to rhyme it with.

Part 3: Conclusions



The project proved to be an effective means of authentic assessment.

Perform with acquired knowledge

Writing this song confirmed that assignments that allow me to utilize my creative side come more natural and I am more motivated. I am better at expressing myself through art instead of written essays and reading assignments.

The social studies teacher was able to show me how protest songs were made using rhyme scheme giving a good history background on the songs. He showed us his own songs for reference which were helpful.

Feedback loop Synthesis and application of knowledge and skills

Real-world applications

Sum is greater than discrete parts

Assessment integral to learning

Part 3: Conclusions



The project proved to be an effective means of authentic assessment.

Real-world applications

It was satisfying to create a song about something important to me. Learning and homework is always more enjoyable for me when I can use my creative side.

Perform with acquired knowledge Feedback loop Synthesis and application of knowledge and skills

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Part 3: Conclusions



The project proved to be an effective means of authentic assessment.

Synthesis and application of knowledge and skills

When I learn a new thing, I combine it with older things I already know to help me comprehend what I am doing.

I knew what melody, harmony, rhythm and meter were, drilled into my head. Now I can apply them to future musical endeavors.

Perform with acquired knowledge Feedback loop

Real-world applications

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Part 3: Conclusions



The project proved to be an effective means of authentic assessment.

Sum is greater than discrete parts

My work does tell a story. The lyrics describe how the U.S. racially profiles actively. It then describes what happens to those people who are profiled, and Why we have to stop.

I choose to rap the song. I believed it would allow me to be intense and powerful.

What was satisfying about composing a song is hearing the end result, and knowing that your hard work paid off.

Perform with acquired knowledge

Feedback loop

Synthesis and application of knowledge and skills

Real-world applications

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Part 3: Conclusions



The project proved to be an effective means of authentic assessment.

Feedback loop

To write the song I had to make a rhythm and write the lyrics in a way so that you have to think about what they meant. Then I rewrote my music many times to sound better.

We went through three to four drafts and two drafts in SoundScape to complete my song

The strongest element of my song is my lyrics because I had many revisions to make them better.

I was able to better understand chords and chord progressions. I was able to listen to what sounds good together and what does not sound good.

Perform with acquired knowledge

Synthesis and application of knowledge and skills

Real-world applications

Sum is greater than discrete parts

Assessment integral to learning

Part 3: Conclusions



The project proved to be an effective means of authentic assessment.

Assessment integral to learning

I feel like now I am able to really express myself while I am singing and I am able to write songs much easier than before.

I have gotten better because I know understand how to write decent lyrics. Before this I just made non-sense lyrics.

SoundScape has taught me how to make different beats flow together. I continue to get better at making one verse flow into the next verse. I have gotten better at combining the lyrics and the beats.

It grew my capabilities because it expanded what I thought I could do and surpassed my expectations.

Perform with acquired knowledge Feedback loop Synthesis and application of knowledge and skills

Real-world applications

Sum is greater than discrete parts

Part 4:
Workshop Activity

Part 5:
Discussion / Q&A