

**Unit/Lesson Instructional Plan**

**Unit/Lesson Title: A Musician’s Life – My Life**  
**Unit/Lesson Author: Carol Visitacion**  
**School: El Capitan Middle**

**Grade Level: 7, 8**  
**District: Central (Fresno)**

**Essential Understanding**

*What is the “Big Idea” of the unit or lesson?*

Students will write an autobiography, understanding that their own life can be written in sequential order like the movements of a symphony. They will see that others like Beethoven and Bill Traylor have overcome tragedies and triumphed. Students will reflect on adversities they have overcome and compare them to their own triumphs. Music can help them tap into the emotions they felt and resolve any conflicts still felt.

Ludwig van Beethoven wrote in the Classical period (1770-1830). His innovative music reflected the aspirations of new ways of thinking, from city-states to a yearning for unity, from wanting Napoleon to be the deliverer, finding him wanting and moving on to write “Eroica” as an ideal when the man Napoleon was found wanting.

**Skills and Knowledge Students Need and/or Will Develop**

Vocabulary definitions for: metaphor, simile, biography, autobiography, symphony, “shouts,” “blues”,  
 allegro, adagio, andante, piano, forte, mezzo piano, brass, percussion, woodwinds, strings, aspirations, ideals.

**Standards Addressed**

<u>Music Content Standards</u>	<u>Content Standards in Other Subject(s)</u>
Vocabulary of the music, of the orchestra, expression and pertinence to their life. National Standards 6b,e,f, 7b,c,a, 6a, 5a, 5b, 2a, 1a, 1b Blues Chords, Identify Blues style in a contemporary song DO,DO, DO, DO,FA,FA, DO, DO, SOL, FA, DO, DO p.137 Blues Style W.C. Handy p.206 32 Bar Song Form AABA	History 8.4 Students analyze the aspirations and ideals of the people of the new nation. Language 7,8 Students study Greek and Latin roots Language 7 Students write an autobiographical sketch

**Objectives: (final performance or product)**

*In what way(s) will students demonstrate what they have learned?*

Students will write an autobiography after studying the outlines and biographies of three other people: the teacher, Ludwig van Beethoven, and Bill Traylor.

### **Student Pre-Assessment**

*How do you know what the students already know? What pre-assessment activities will help you determine what students already know?*

We will write one-paragraph "QuickWrites" for a few days on "What is your earliest memory of music"? "What music do you remember from kindergarten or your parents playing?" "What do you listen to now?" Brainstorm as a class all the instruments the students know. Ask them who is Beethoven or Bill Traylor and put on the overhead as a word bank.

### **Teacher's Needs Assessment**

*What content knowledge and resources will you need to implement this lesson?*

Books: Deep Blues, Bill Traylor, Self-Taught Artist by Mary E. Lyons. Charles Scribner and Sons, 1994.

Ludwig Van Beethoven by Dynise Balcavage. Chelsea House, 1997.

Story of the Orchestra by Robert Levine. Black Dog, 2001.

Music in Our Lives. Glencoe, 2006.

### **Final Student Assessment**

*How will you know that students have achieved the standard?* They will write an autobiography outline. They will write a rough draft. They will edit and add musical terms. They will write a final draft.

### **Learning Sequence**

*The Lesson Plan: What are the various steps in the unit/lesson implementation?*

**Pre Activities** - Survey knowledge.

1. Brainstorm musical instruments they know, pair share.
2. Take a musical survey.
3. Write paragraphs on different memories of music.

### **During Activities**

1. Vocabulary introduction

Use realia and four corner activities, real instruments and the practice of labeling each corner brass, woodwind, string, and percussion. Have each student be an instrument and going to the corner,

2. Link word to other words they know (scaffold).
3. Outline their own life as teacher outlines his or hers.
4. Listen to biographies of Ludwig van Beethoven as a writer during the times of the American Revolution and Bill Traylor, Artist at age 83 after being a slave during the Civil War and the blues arising from chants, shouts and spirituals. (See life as similes and metaphor to the music produced by these men.)
5. Write rough drafts share with partner.
6. Edit, edit with partner the works of others.
7. Final drafts
8. Share with

### **After Activities**

Share as a group how the lives of the composer Beethoven and Bill Traylor, who heard the blues, chants, shouts and spirituals, were similar and different to their own lives. Compose blues lyrics about topics, (ie. "Lunch").

### **Vocabulary**

*What vocabulary will students need to know and learn, in order to achieve the standards addressed in the unit/lesson?*

Autobiography, allegro, adagio, andante, forte, piano, fortissimo, pianissimo, mezzo forte, mezzo piano

Blues, chants, shouts, spirituals, symphony, brass, woodwinds, strings, percussion, families

### **Equipment, Materials and Resources**

*What equipment, materials, and resources will you need to implement the unit/lesson and the student assessment?*

CD player and CD from The Story of the Orchestra, by Meridith Hamilton; CD from Keeping Score of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony excerpt; Two books: Deep Blues, Bill Traylor, and Ludwig van Beethoven by Dynise Balcavage; paper, pencils, realia or posters of musical instruments or drawings of them on cards, overhead and pens

### **Additional Notes**

*What adaptations might you make to the learning sequence, to meet the needs of different students?*

*Any other notes or comments you would offer with regard to implementing this unit/lesson?*

\*I would write my own outline as a teacher and have the students do their own as I model. I would write out the biography of Beethoven and Traylor with respect to music. I would have them copy it in printing or cursive to their level (English Learner, Intervention, RSP). I would have them write each paragraph with instructions together, i.e., topic sentence. More lead into each sentence could be given if needed.

\*\*"Blues is a genre of African American music that often expresses frustration, sadness or longing." from Music, (p. 136) by Glencoe Publishing, 2006 (and also the following)

\*\*"Blues usually has many verses, each consisting of three lines. The first states the situation; the second usually repeats the first exactly assuring clarity and building tension. Then the third, or rhyming line, resolves the situation:" "The third line sees humor and dashes the self-pity of the first two lines."

Examples:

"Gonna lay my head right on the railroad track,  
Gonna lay my head right on the railroad track,  
If the train come 'long, I'm gonna snatch it back."

\*I want to use this genre to have the students in my Pre-Algebra class memorize, then develop blues verses to learn math ideas, like the Pythagorean Theorem or the order of operations or multiplication squares, etc.