



The Ingredients Needed for a Musical National Park

Curriculum Unit 90.03.04
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Music has always been a part of America's heritage. American music can be traced back to PreColonial days when Native American Indians used it in their celebrations.

Today it is inconceivable to think of our country or world without music. Even when there were silent motion pictures, music was added. This oral tradition of self expression is important to our history and should be recognized more widely in our schools.

This thought leads us to another American tradition, the desire to preserve for all eternity fragments of our society which are of national significance. Preservation could take the form of a monument, a building, a natural land formation, an isolated area, or other fitting tribute.

Americans became aware of the need to preserve their heritage in the mid 1800's. At that time there was a growing movement by naturalists to set aside relics of our society. The precedent for this was established by ancient cultures such as those in Greece, Italy, and Egypt and how they preserved relics of their society for all to see. As a result of mounting pressure from writers, developers, naturalists, environmentalists, and explores, Yellowstone became our country's first National Park in 1872. As a direct result of this Congressional Act, the National Parks Service took it's shape.

The question that I am attempting to answer is, since America has had such a rich musical heritage (though the National Parks System), why is there not a musical National Park in the National Parks System? The answer of course is just as complex as the question. In the past there have been attempts to establish such a unit, all had to be abandoned for various reasons.

What I hope to achieve is to give students, teachers, as well as the National Parks Service some background information into a few of the stronger candidates for units (based on research) in the National Parks Service. I will base this evaluation from more of a musical point of view than a naturalist's point of view. For educators I will give valuable information into music of America and the workings of the National Parks Service.

The purpose of this unit will be to;

- a. Identify musical sites that are worthy of being included as units of the National Parks System.
- b. Define the criteria used to establish one of these units.

- c. Anthologize American music from primitive times to today.
- d. Establish a correlation between music and geography.
- e. Identify the musical unit(s) which seem to be the most significant.

The targeted population for this unit will be students in grades 5-8. (Although it can easily be adapted for use with high school aged students). This unit can be taught at any particular time of the school year.

What is the Connection?

Music and Geography both can be classified as sciences. Geography is the science of our land, while music though it's subdivision Acoustic's is known as the science of sound.

What influences people to write and perform great musical scores? The surroundings influence people of different regions of this country and the world. Individuals are linked with their homeland though physical and psychological reactions and form a bond with nature. The physical limitations of the land in life also limits them in their composing of music.

When one thinks of music, different scenes come to mind. These scenes seem to be enhanced by the beauty of their musical score. Music is of course all around us. Though our three most widely used media, radio, television, and motion pictures, the spread of music is universal and now beyond. When was the last time you saw a motion picture or a television program end without some sort of theme music? Music is involved in all our sports activities. It is an important element in all special events such as parades, inaugurations, balls, and other sports events.

Music is greatly influenced by geography more than most people think. Geography on the other hand has created all of our natural wonders and many of our National Parks. Different types of music are idiomatic to climates and altitudes. Weather effects the type of music that is written in different climates of the world. If you were to make a comparison of the music of a warm region verses the music of a cold region you would find that warmer climates produce rich and complex rhythms and melodies. Colder climates produce much more simpler rhythms and melodies that are usually one line with no harmonic background.

Along with climates effecting music of a region there is also altitude's effect on music. In high altitudes (such as Denver, Co.) you would find an airiness to music that is composed by composers from there. Composers who live in lowlands (such as the Middle East) will usually use a contrast between rich and deep sounds in their music. In contrast a rocky and hilly land surface would produce a somewhat strong or firm rhythm.

Folk music is very strongly influenced by the geography of that region. Folk music which is an oral tradition of telling stories has gone on for many centuries. These stories are sometimes changed thousands of times throughout this time. Irish Folk music is considered the finest in the world although much of it has never been recorded. Much of our oral tradition today would be lost without Folk music.

Other forces on music today include weather, seasonal changes, pollution, environmental changes, and other natural elements.

Even today in popular music a different type of song is written at different times of the year. Seasons and climate both have a major role in the type of song that is produced. In classical compositions cold weather climates produce music that expresses hardships and bitterness, while warm climates express a feeling of peace and tranquility in their music.

A person needs only to think of the liveliness expressed in music from countries such as Mexico or Spain to remind them of the typical effect warm climates have on composers.

Africa a continent that is known for its warm weather produces songs and chants that are found in very few other countries. Africans use various multirhythmic patterns, along with complex parts and harmony in most of their songs. The additional use of hand clapping and drumming is also crucial to this style of music.

Geography also influences other mediums such as visual art, sculpture, and architecture. Music and nature do compliment each other. Regions of the world that are strong reflect a feeling of peace and sturdiness in their music. Their songs also express a feeling of independence or freedom and security from all of the burdens that daily life can bring. Without geography influencing music there would certainly be fewer impulses in our day to day life. This could certainly make our lives dull and boring. Music has its place in our heritage and in some way should be recognized by the National Parks System.

What Criteria to Use?

In order for any new unit to be added to the National Parks System the area must be of significance to the nation. Many areas start out as either units of the National Registry or the National Landmarks program.

The National Landmarks Program was started in 1935 and protects areas that are of national significance from the federal government. These areas are not owned by the National Parks Service but they may be consulted by groups or individuals seeking advice.

The National Registry Program which began in 1966 and was amended by Congress in 1980 registers properties that have not been judged worthy by the National Parks Service and will not protect them from the federal government. These properties can be submitted by the owner, state, or other interest groups. Today there are approximately 1923 units in the National Landmarks Program and over 1600 units in the National Registry.

Significance in this instance means a unit or person must be noteworthy of remembering. Units are established for all United States Presidents, prominent leaders and other dignitaries throughout history. Based on this criteria a music unit of some sort should be established. There have certainly been many outstanding contributors to America's development and heritage by musicians.

The National Parks Service will conduct area studies of units to determine if they are in fact of national significance. If they find a unit to be noteworthy a recommendation to Congress will be made. Congress may choose to act on that unit or maybe another unit depending on lobbying and pressure from citizen groups. In order for a unit to finally become an addition to the National Parks Service a Congressional Act is needed.

Areas can be deemed noteworthy in value by private citizens, community groups, federal, state, or local agencies. These are the people who can get the ball rolling.

In order to be eligible for consideration by the National Parks Service a unit must possess national significance either through cultural, nature, or recreational value. The unit must also be suitable and feasible to the needs

of the National Parks System. Finally, the unit must require the management and protection of the National Parks System rather than by another agency or the private sector.

This series of procedures usually takes a number of years with many reports and meetings taking place along the way. In order to proceed to the next level of evaluation the unit must meet a certain set of criteria at that level.

By establishing this criteria the people of America can be assured that units will only be added if they are the finest examples that our nation has to offer.

Music in America

Music in America can be traced back to PreColonial times. This primitive style of music began with the Native American Indians. The American Indians used music as a teaching tool. Though music the tribal history was passed on from generation to generation. Other subject matter included hunting and fishing trips, tribal songs, and even songs about his tepee.

By the 1600's, America had become colonized. The Pilgrims and Puritans brought with them their own musical traditions to New England and other coastal areas. By the 1700's the Revolutionary War became the biggest influence of music. Battle marches such as Yankee Doodle became the popular music of the day. Stepping into the 1800's we find the War of 1812 and the writing of the Star Spangled Banner taking center stage. In the mid 1800's Stephen Foster and the Minstrel Shows helped spread American Folk Music throughout the country.

With the beginning of bloodshed in the 1860's the Civil War produced many popular marches. Songs such as "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and "Dixie" lead troops on opposing sides into battle against one another. By the late 1800's America felt many different influences on it's music. To begin with we were involved in another war, The Spanish-American War and also there was a growing trend toward nationalism and impressionism. The latter two being a direct response to music in Europe.

By the 1900's many significant events and influences effected music of that time. First the birth of American Opera took place during this time and Symphony Orchestras here began to grow. In addition Ragtime and the Blues were making their presences known.

By World War I not only did jazz establish itself as "America's" music but once again we find ourselves engaged in another war. Wars seem to produce quality songs and World War I was no exception. The roaring 20's were another turning point in America's musical development. With more people moving from rural to urban areas music of this era was effected. Jazz continued to go strong but in addition there was a significant growth in the size of the concert hall audience.

After the stock market crash in 1929 the 1930's introduced us to radio, spirituals, and the growth of recorded music. Ballads, and Folk Music, along with theater, motion picture (music), and television became the trend after World War II.

Rock 'n' Roll and electronic music became important trends of the 1950's. During the 1960's America braced itself for the new "British Invasion". There was also a cry for "Soul Music" by inner city blacks as well as the gigantic Woodstock Concert in 1969. Social consciousness, large outdoor concerts, and the birth of Disco occurred during the 1970's.

In the 1980's music was controlled by mega stars such as Michael Jackson and Madonna. Their star status was greatly enhanced and can be attributed to the rising popularity of MTV and the music video industry.

Today music is a big business which includes posters, jackets, modern cassettes, and Compact Disc. This is the then and now of music.

Identification of Possible Sites

The following list of units that are protected by the National Historic Landmarks Program will contain some well known people and places and some not so well known people and places.

They all seem to have one of the following three things in common. They are either famous buildings or halls that are associated with music, churches of musical importance, or a famous Black American person with the one exception of the John Phillip Sousa House. What you find missing are mainstream American composers, Country and Western Composers, and also Rock 'n Roll composers. One can only speculate as to why this is so. Maybe it is the association of Jazz (America's Music) with Black Americans in this country. What ever the reason it is interesting to see what is not included thus far in the National Landmarks Program.

It is also interesting to note that all of these units with the exception of four are located in the Northeast. Many of them are located in New York State. Whatever the reason the following is a listing of units that have been designated by the National Landmarks Program.

- a. Musical Fund Society Hall, Pa
- b. St. George's Episcopal Church, N.Y.
- c. Will Marion Cook House, N.Y.
- d. Louis Armstrong House, N.Y.
- e. Edward Kennedy Ellington House, (Duke) N.Y.
- f. Beale Street Historic Distric, Tn
- g. Mutual Musicans Association Building, Mo
- h. James Weldon Johnson Residence, N.Y.
- i. Scott Joplin Residence, Mo
- j. Florence Hills House, N.Y.
- k. John Phillip Sousa House, N.Y.
- l. Dubose Heyward House, N.Y.
- m. Academy of Music, Pa
- n. Carnegie Hall, N.Y.
- o. Cincinnati Music Hall, Oh
- p. Constitution Hall, D.C.
- q. Paul Roberson Residence, N.Y.
- r. MacDowell Colony, N.H.

Thus far I have examined America's music, its relationship to the land, the criteria used for establishing a National Park Unit, and some of the possible sites. What needs to be addressed at this time is what site would be most appropriate to represent music?

What is an Appropriate Site?

When addressing this question what needs to be thought about first is the National Parks System's existing criteria for choosing a unit. Along with land or size restrictions there is also one other important stipulation, if a person is to be named as honorary it must be someone who has been dead for at least fifty years. This assures the Parks Service and the people of America have had enough time to fully recognize the persons contribution.

While doing my research I found a few other places or people in America that have made a measurable contribution to music in our country.

1. Julliard School of Music 1923

2. Eastman School of Music 1921

3. George Gershwin

4. George Peabody (School of Music) 1857

5. Philadelphia Academy of Music 1857

6. Stephen Foster

7. Boston's King's Chapel 1713 (Site of the first organ built in New England, by Thomas Brattle).

8. The Philharmonic Society of N.Y. 1842 (The first permanent orchestra in America).

9. New York Metropolitan Opera House 1883

When looking at all the possible sites and people who have made an outstanding contribution to music I find myself zeroing in on two famous people and one important site. The people who I feel have done the most for American music and fit the established criteria would be John Phillip Sousa, and George Gershwin. The most important site for music practice and performance would be the Julliard School of Music and The Metropolitan Opera House. These two building along with The Lincoln Center are within walking distance of each other and could be joined together as one unit of the National Parks System.

The question could this be done and how this could be done is one which I am not qualified to answer. It is one that could be answered by the National Parks Service as mentioned earlier though a series of studies. To begin with someone or group must submit the property to the National Registry. If it is accepted it needs to then be submitted to the National Landmarks Program. This program as mentioned previously would protect the property from the government. This means that the government could not purchase the property for any

land development, or other purposes. The property is not owned by the National Parks Service but they more or less overlook the property.

Next a series of three studies would be conducted hopefully by three different groups. Progression to the next sequential study would depend on the results of the previous study. The first study is known as an "Environmental Impact Study". This study looks at factors such as traffic flow, visibility of the site, air traffic over the site, the amount of visitors an area could support and other factors. After this study is completed and evaluated it is then recommended to the next step or ended. If it goes on to the next step a different set of criteria is used. The second step is known as an "Integrity and Significances Study". In other words is this truly the best example of this style available? Will the example hold it's weight though Congressional cross examination? If it is not the best example then what is, and how do we get it? If this is the best of the rest then should we go with it or end the process here?

Finally a suitability and feasibility study is conducted. This study will determine if the site is suitable to the Park's Service needs. This study would also determine if it is feasible to operate such a site. In other words does this site satisfy all the requirements as previously stated? Is the site within the realm of operation for the National Parks Service.

This sort of criteria lends itself to many spirited discussions and projects for teachers as well as students throughout the school year.

The two musical people that I have chosen are names that are synonymous with music in America. One Mr. Sousa is already recognized by the Park's service while the other Mr. Gershwin thus far has not. The following paragraphs give information into the various backgrounds of each of these individuals, and why I feel that they are worthy of recognition by the National Park's Service.

John Phillip Sousa already has been named to the Historic Landmarks Program. This means that the National Parks Service has recognized his contribution and have found a site to associate with him.

Mr. Sousa was of course known as the "March King". He was also director of the Marine Corp Band and is credited with saving that organization from ruin and establishing it as the premiere military marching unit. Although he composed many marches in his lifetime he is best known for composing the "Stars and Stripes Forever". Mr. Sousa remained active in music after he left the Marine Band and continued his own band tradition taking it to many foreign lands. He received numerous awards and decorations for this. Later along with other musicians he helped to create ASCAP, American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers. This organization is probably the most widely known musician society in America.

The Sousa House is located in the town of Sand's Point, Port Washington, N.Y. on Long Island. As of June 1990 it is up for sale. (This information I received after a recent phone conversation with the town Historian). The house is nicknamed "Wildbank" by the local town's people. The house has not been opened to the public having been owned privately for many years. The house is in good condition and has a great deal of land. (See Attachment IA)

In fact a study was conducted into the possibility of adding the Sousa House to the National Parks System. This study unfortunately had to be abandoned on two separate occasions for other priorities at the time. It is hoped that at some point in the not so distant future the Parks Service commissions another study to be completed this time with favorable results.

George Gershwin another great American composer is another contributor to America's rich musical heritage. Mr. Gershwin who lived only a short time, made a profound impact on American music and society.

Gershwin was born in Brooklyn N.Y. and attended the Julliard School of Music as a classmate of Aaron Copland. He was known as a worldwide symbol of American music and produced some of the more well known Jazz/Classical compositions.

He began his career in Tin Pan Alley (New York's publishing center in the 1900's for music). Although he enjoyed performing and was very good at this his first love was composing. In 1919 his first big break occurred when Al Jolson performed his song "Swanee" from the Broadway Musical "La, La, Lucille".

In the 1920's he teamed with Jazz bandleader Paul Whiteman to record songs. At the time Whiteman was looking for a special piece to complete his program. Gershwin put it off for a while but finally sat down and in a few days composed "Rhapsody in Blue" modeled after Liszt's "Hungarian Rhapsodies".

At this point Mr. Gershwin felt that there was a need to learn more about Classical music and sought to become a pupil of Maurice Ravel first, and finally Igor Stravinsky. Both turned him down citing his already existing success in music.

His next chapter proved to be one of his best. Gershwin next decided that he must learn more about the roots of Jazz. He had also become interested in DuBose Heywood's novel "Porgy" which Heywood along with his wife Dorothy had just made into a play.

To prepare himself for this next challenge Gershwin spent many months living among the "Gullah" people of Charleston, S.C. While there he learned their many customs including religious ceremonies but more importantly studied their dialect. The story is based on life among these people is based on life in Catfish Row, the Negro tenement along Charleston's waterfront.

Along with his brother Ira whom he worked with before to produce "An American in Paris", he completed the production. The musical premiered in Boston on October 10, 1935. The show ran for 124 performances before being put to rest only to be revived in 1942. The show received its greatest success in 1952 when an all negro cast was sent by the State Department to Europe and the U.S.S.R. Its arias such as "Summertime", "I Got Plenty O Nuthin, You is My Woman Now, It Ain't Necessarily So", and others, helped to promote Jazz as a classical form.

Gershwin continued composing until his sudden death from a brain tumor in 1937.

Gershwin has done much to further the cause of America's music but, has not at this time been recognized by any national program. The problem could be in finding a site for a memorial to him. Much of Brooklyn and Tin Pan Alley in New York are not what they were in Gershwin's time. This is a terrible loss for the American people. Recognition in some way is warranted for Gershwin for his many contributions to American music.

Based on all the research that I have done a musical addition to the National Parks System is needed. I have also reached the conclusion that the Sousa house in Long Island would still seem to be the best choice for this unit. Whatever unit is selected (if one is indeed ever), I am sure it will be one that represents the true spirit of American music. Which would you choose?

Lesson Plans

I. Map Skills

Map reading is one of the things that many adults take for granted. Yet it is one of the skills that today's youth are deficient in. Maps not only give directions and locations of cities, but also provide information such as points of interest, transportation centers, (such as airports) and other useful information.

To begin with have available for your students a sufficient number of maps. An atlas can also be used in lieu of a map. (I have found a good source of maps to be the AAA. Over the years I have accumulated many different maps of various destinations throughout the Eastern and Southern parts of the U.S.)

Divide the students into groups of four to five students. Provide each group with a map. Using the section from this essay titled *Identification of Possible Units* locate and record the city (if available) and/or state for each unit. Have one student record the answers and hand them in to you. For more of a variety have the students identify other musical landmarks such as Elvis Presley's home and the Grand Ole Opry in Tennessee and Woodstock in New York. Some teachers may wish to have their students find other places of musical interest. This activity should be fun and rewarding for you and your students.

II. Written Essay

Writing skills are another area that needs improvement with our students. They should be provided with every opportunity possible to display their writing skills.

To begin with provide the students with the list of people and places suitable for an essay. (Again names and places are given in this essay under the heading *Identification of Possible Units*). The names and places of other American composers can be substituted.

The essay should include the following subdivisions. An introduction or purpose for writing this report at least 1/2 page in length, a body of at least four pages of text, and a conclusion or summary of at least 1/2 page in length.

This format can be edited to suit individual teaching styles and situations.

III. Field Trip

This is the ideal lesson because it will provide your students with hands on knowledge with places of some sort of significance. By looking through the National Registry of Historic Places, The National Landmarks Registry or checking Appendix A of this essay, a listing of places in and around New Haven, Ct. can be found.

Many other places of significance can be identified for visitation by your music class. The Shubert Theater in Downtown New Haven gives summer workshops and tours during it's open house as well as other times throughout the school year. The Center Church on the Green gives organ concerts and occasionally tours of it's pipe room where all the pipes for the organ are stored.

This lesson is very flexible and can be altered to suit individual teachers needs.

It is important that before each field trip the teacher provides the students with background information on the site to be visited. A follow up discussion or written report should culminate this activity.

The Landmarks book and Registry book should be available at most public libraries, Sterling Memorial Library at Yale University in New Haven, or at the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, 53 Wall Street, New Haven, Ct. as a supplement to this unit.

IV. Landmarks/Registry Search

Some students and teachers may be surprised to find that places such as the Shubert Theater are not included on any national list. In various cities and towns you may find the same situation in existence. There could be a music hall, band shell, church, or even a school that you and your class believe to be significant.

Have the students in groups of four to five come up with as many places as possible given the general criteria for landmarks and registry units. Have them first decide why the unit should be included in the programs and secondly why they feel that the unit has been excluded thus far. This sort of investigation could include visits or calls to the local town hall or records office or any number of other investigative procedures. This can be a very exciting group activity.

V. Information Search

Have available a list of National Park Units or National Landmarks Units (Once again refer to the sources listed in the previous lesson).

Have the students choose the unit that they find most appealing to them. Have the students write a letter to that unit requesting any information available on that unit. Once the students have received information back from their units, have them bring it into your classroom for an informational sharing session.

Ideally try to have each student select a different unit of the National Parks Service to write to. Remember to always check the final draft of the students letter for grammar before it is mailed out.

VI. Computer Work

If you have computers in your classroom than, you have gained another valuable research tool. In the New Haven Public Schools the Joston Learning Center has become a very important research and teaching assistant.

This system has just added a program known as Compton's Multimedia Encyclopedia. By using this the students have the entire Compton's Encyclopedia at their finger tips. Included in this program is a unit on National Parks. As a form of research the students could read and also write about various National Parks and other Park related information. The amount of research and kind will depend upon each individual teacher.

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NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS IN NEW HAVEN (city only)

Russell Henry Chittenden House

83 Trumbull Street

Chittenden was the father of American biochemistry and Director of Yale's Sheffield Scientific School

Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

123 Huntington Street

The first agricultural experimental station in the nation, it established the principles of scientific agriculture

Connecticut Hall, Yale

Old Campus

Only Pre-Revolutionary building on campus, lone survivor of Brick Row, contains room of Eli Whitney and memorial to Nathan Hale

James Dwight Dana House

24 Hillhouse Avenue

Home of the scholar who broadened geology into the sub-discipline of historical geology worldwide

Othniel C. Marsh House

360 Prospect Street

Home of the originator of the science of paleontology in America, creator of the fossil-hunting Western searches

Lafayette B. Mendel House

18 Trumbull Street

Home of the scientist who identified vitamins and completed the pioneering research on proteins and nutrition

New Haven Green

Chapel, College, Elm and Church

Fullest surviving colonial green, the setting of three remarkable churches viewed as one of the outstanding “urban ensembles” of the 19th century, built 1812-16 in the midst of war.

Yale Bowl

Chapel Street and Yale Avenue

Oldest active college stadium in the nation, the largest when constructed, commemorates Yale’s pervasive influence on the development of intercollegiate sports

Yale University

Various locations

Various structures taken collectively to represent the third oldest institution of higher education in the nation and the most extensive example of Collegiate Gothic

United States Department of the Interior Geological Survey

(figure available in print form)

John Philip Sousa House—UTM U.S.G.S. 7.5’ series, Sea Cliff Quad. Long Island, New York
18.607100.4521910

Diagram of property belonging to John Philip Sousa, situated at Sands Point, Nassau County, New York.
(figure available in print form)

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