



The Ingredients Needed for a Musical National Park

Guide for Curriculum Unit 90.03.04
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This unit explores the question of why isn't there a musical unit in the National Parks System. The unit is presented from a musical background and is designed for use at the middle school level in grades 5-8. The unit's major focus is the National Parks System and how it should go about selecting a musical unit. There is also a great deal of information on the correlation of music, geography, and social studies. Through this cross referencing the unit can easily be adapted to a geography, social studies or physical science class.

The material in the unit is presented in five, clearly defined sections, all in sequential order, with one building upon material from the previous section. The first section, "What is the Connection?," looks into the close correlation of music to geography. It looks into how things such as climate, the environment, pollution, seasons, land formation, weather, and other factors influence music. The next section, "What Criteria are Used?," looks at the National Registry, National Parks Service, and the National Landmarks Program. There is also discussion into what is meant by "significance" of an area and why one area might be chosen over another. The third section talks about music in America. It begins with the Native American Indians in the 1600s and finishes with music in the 1900s. Along the way mention is made of major music and world events that influenced the time. The fourth section lists the already existing sites in the National Historic Landmarks Program. These eighteen sites have already been deemed significant and could lead into a number of classroom activities. The final section examines some of the sites and people that seem to be significant in American music but have not been added to any National List at this point. There is also recognition given to three units in particular; two are famous musicians while the other is an important musical site.

The list of activities include written reports, group discussions, field trips, and work with computers. Finally there is an extensive bibliography as well as maps prepared by the Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. This is a complete learning and teaching unit.

(Recommended for Music, Social Studies, and Geography, grades 5-12)

Key Words

Music History American Folklore Parks U.S. National

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