



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
1993 Volume III: Twentieth-Century Multicultural Theater

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## **Multicultural Theater in Music**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 93.03.03  
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This curriculum unit is designed to help fourth- and fifth-grade students build their knowledge and experiences in music by learning to express their own concepts, ideas and emotions through the Arts, namely music and drama. Singing, playing instruments, creating, and improvising will allow students to acquire musical skills and knowledge that can be developed in no other way, while performing on stage will require students to develop skills in working with others. Learning to read and notate music will give them a unique skill with which to explore music.

This unit provides examples from history, contemporary American society, and two other cultures (African and Asian). Identifying significant works and recognizing the aesthetic qualities of drama, from different historical periods and cultures will help students appreciate the importance of the Arts in expressing and illuminating human experiences. It focuses on the cultural diversity between African and Asian styles of drama helping students to understand that personal beliefs and societal values influence art forms and styles. Identifying the materials, processes, and tools used in a dramatic production, exhibition or public performance will make it possible for students to use and understand language appropriate to the art forms when discussing, critiquing, and interpreting.

There are five sections in this unit which may be taught in sequence or used at the teacher's discretion. Each section is complete with objectives, lesson plans, vocabulary words, and suggestions for materials needed. The contents include: I. Preparing the Teacher/Director; II. Dramatic Training for Children; III. History of the Theater; IV. Understanding Cultural Diversity through African and Asian Drama; and V. An African Play and An Asian Play/Performance. Suggestions for books and resources that can be used to enhance each lesson are given. Lessons are flexible enough to allow the teacher to substitute or add materials to supplement and personalize the lessons.

As a result of the unit students should be able to create visual art, act, use notation in music, analyze and respond to performances, evaluate the quality of performances, and make connections with related disciplines. Teachers should be able to direct, and successfully produce a staged play or musical.

(Recommended for Music classes, Grades 4-5)

### **Key Words**

*Drama Music Multicultural Theater*

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