

EDUCATOR GUIDE

Story Theme: American Music
Subject: David Grisman
Discipline: Music

SECTION I - OVERVIEW	2
EPISODE THEME	
SUBJECT	
CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS	
OBJECTIVE	
STORY SYNOPSIS	
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES	
INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES	
EQUIPMENT NEEDED	
MATERIALS NEEDED	
INTELLIGENCES ADDRESSED	
SECTION II – CONTENT/CONTEXT	3
CONTENT OVERVIEW	
THE BIG PICTURE	
RESOURCES – TEXTS	
PERIODICALS	
AUDIO RESOURCES – DAVID GRISMAN	
DISCOGRAPHY – BLUEGRASS	
RESOURCES – WEB SITES	
VIDEO RESOURCES	
BAY AREA FIELD TRIPS	
SECTION III – VOCABULARY	8
SECTION IV – ENGAGING WITH SPARK	10



Bluegrass musician and producer David Grisman (center) playing a show at the Freight & Salvage in Berkeley , CA.
Still image from SPARK story, February 2005.

SECTION I - OVERVIEW

EPISODE THEME

American Music

SUBJECT

David Grisman

GRADE RANGES

K-12, Post-Secondary

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Music

OBJECTIVE

To introduce educators and students to David Grisman and the music of bluegrass and to inspire students to explore traditional American music

STORY SYNOPSIS

David Grisman has been performing his unique style of music for over 30 years, combining bluegrass with elements of swing, jazz and gypsy music. In this episode, Spark explores the world of David Grisman as he returns to his roots and prepares for a performance at Berkeley's Freight and Salvage for a night of traditional bluegrass music.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Individual and group research
Individual and group exercises
Written research materials
Group oral discussion, review and analysis

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

To educate students about the genre of bluegrass
To entice students to explore traditional American music
To reveal how traditional arts are in constant evolution
To inspire students to learn to play acoustic instruments and learn traditional songs

EQUIPMENT NEEDED

SPARK story "American Music" about musician and producer, David Grisman on DVD or VHS and related equipment
Computer with Internet access, navigation software, speakers and a sound card, printer
Cassette player, CD player, or computer audio program

MATERIALS NEEDED

Access to libraries with up-to-date collections of periodicals, books, research papers and videos
Different examples of bluegrass (see **Resource** section)
Pens, Pencils, Paper

INTELLIGENCES ADDRESSED

Logical-Mathematical – the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively and think logically
Spatial Intelligence – the ability to manipulate and create mental images in order to solve problems
Musical – the ability to read, understand and compose musical pitches, tones, and rhythms
Bodily-Kinesthetic - the ability to use one's mind to control one's bodily movements
Interpersonal – the ability to understand the feelings and motivations of others
Intrapersonal – the ability to understand one's own feelings and motivations



See more information on
[Multiple Intelligences](http://www.kqed.org/spark/education) at
www.kqed.org/spark/education.

SECTION II – CONTENT/CONTEXT

CONTENT OVERVIEW

For more than 40 years musician and composer David Grisman has been bluegrass music's greatest champion and innovator. Based in San Rafael, California, Grisman has earned a reputation as both a virtuoso mandolinist and one of the world's leading proponents of traditional American music. SPARK checks in on Grisman as he prepares for an evening performance of old time bluegrass at the Freight and Salvage Coffee Shop in Berkeley.

A predominantly Southern style of music, bluegrass is a spirited combination of country, blues, and gospel that emerged in the 1940s. As a teenager, Grisman picked up the mandolin after discovering the music of Bill Monroe, commonly regarded as the founder of bluegrass. By the late 1960s, Grisman began to explore other styles including jazz, folk, and Gypsy music, to create a hybrid form unlike anything that had come before him. In 1975 he founded the David Grisman Quintet, which features Grisman's mandolin leading in a series of instrumentals that defy easy categorization. Offhandedly naming his new style after a nickname that the Grateful Dead's Jerry Garcia had given him, Grisman created "dawg" music--a term that remains current in contemporary bluegrass circles.

Like other forms of roots music, bluegrass passes from generation to generation not through formal notation but rather as an oral tradition, in a live exchange between performers. Ever dedicated to preserving bluegrass, Grisman established the Acoustic Disc record label in 1990 in an effort to help establish a recorded legacy of traditional and contemporary bluegrass music. Since the founding of the Acoustic Disc label, Grisman has recorded over 60 records by almost as many performers.

In another effort to preserve traditional bluegrass, at least once a year Grisman hangs up his hat as musical innovator to perform an evening of old time music

with his traditional outfit, the David Grisman Bluegrass Experience. It is an event that brings in a wide audience, including bluegrass and country aficionados, folkies, and Dead Heads. Spark is there as this year's performance packs the house.

David Grisman was born in New Jersey and began playing bluegrass while attending New York University. While living in Greenwich Village, he recorded with a number of bands gaining popularity in the burgeoning 1960s folk scene. In 1970, Grisman moved to San Francisco, where he befriended Jerry Garcia and lent his talents to the Grateful Dead classic *American Beauty*. Since then, he has recorded dozens of records, with his own bands and with artists such as Emmylou Harris, Bonnie Raitt, Dolly Parton, Earl Scruggs, and jazz violinist and Django Reinhardt collaborator Stephane Grappelli.



David Grisman at work on a musical composition.
Still image from SPARK story, February 2005.

THE BIG PICTURE

Although born less than 100 years ago, bluegrass can claim to have its beginnings in the music of the early American settlers and pioneers of the 1600s who brought the songs of their European roots to the Carolinas, Virginias, Tennessee and Kentucky. Over time, the songs were adapted to describe life on the

farms and on the hills on which they lived, often including sentiments about love, death and religious belief. This music became known as “mountain,” “country,” “old time” and “hillbilly” music.

The advent of the radio and phonograph in the early 1900s spread the music across the country, culminating in the opening of the Grand Old Opry 1927, borne out of the WSM (We Shield Millions) Barn Dance. In that same year, Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family made the first “hillbilly” recordings at a recording session for the Victor label in Bristol, Tennessee. Over the next 17 years the Carter Family recorded more than 300 ballads, traditional songs, country songs, and Gospel hymns of southeastern folk life, contributing a significant portion of the musical history of the United States of that period.

Capitalizing on this popularity, two brothers, Bill and Charlie Monroe who had a very successful band in the 1920s and 30s called the Monroe Brothers, split in 1938 to form two new bands called Bill Monroe and the Blue Grass Boys. The name – the Blue Grass Boys – came from the brothers’ birth state, Kentucky, which is known as the Bluegrass state.

(NOTE: Kentucky Bluegrass is a bluish-green grass, native to Europe, northern Asia, and northern Africa. Although it can be found today in all of the cooler US states, it is not a native plant. Bluegrass is believed to have been brought to the US by early colonists with other plant and flower seeds from their homelands.)

The Blue Grass Boys were a different band. They had a powerful driving sound with distinctive vocal harmonies that set a precedent for all bands to follow. Bill’s high vocal style also became coined as the “high lonesome” sound, later emulated by thousands of singers. They were also distinct in that they able combined songs and rhythmic elements from string bands, country and blues tunes, black and white gospel songs, work songs and shouts to create a style that was truly an amalgam of southern country culture. Monroe and his band joined the Grand Old Opry in 1939 and quickly became one of the most popular touring groups out of Nashville.

Although the Blue Grass Boys set the stage for the bluegrass movement, the first recording considered to be *real* bluegrass was made in 1946 after banjo-player Earl Scruggs joined the band, adding his hot,

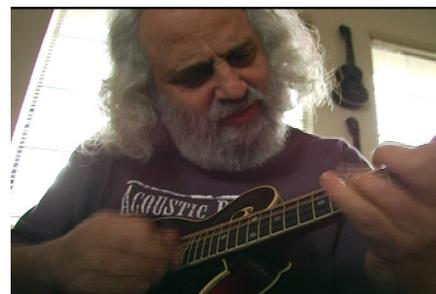
3-finger picking style to the band’s overall sound. The instrumentation of mandolin, banjo, fiddle, guitar and bass of the Blue Grass Boys remains the classic bluegrass lineup.

Scruggs and guitarist Lester Flatt eventually left Monroe’s band to form the Foggy Mountain Boys. They joined forces with Burkett H. “Uncle Josh” Graves, who adapted Scruggs’ picking style to his dobro (a reso-phonic slide bar steel guitar), creating a sensation with his bluesy style, and the reason why many bluegrass bands today also include dobro.

By the 1950s, “bluegrass” was its own genre and Bill Monroe was recognized as the “Father of Bluegrass.” Throughout the 1960s and 70s, bluegrass and folk music festivals sprung up across the country, furthering its popularity. Additionally, the music was beginning to be heard in television and movie soundtracks, such as Bonnie and Clyde (1967), The Beverly Hillbillies (1962-1971) and Deliverance (1972).

In recent years old-time and bluegrass music has enjoyed a resurgence, largely due to the 2001 hit movie O Brother, Where Art Thou?, written and directed by Joel and Ethan Coen. (Interested listeners can stream samples from the album on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com))

Artists such as David Grisman cut their teeth as musicians on bluegrass music and have seen the genre develop through over time. They have also contributed their own influences to the music, incorporating elements of swing, jazz, gypsy, Celtic, folk, pop, rock and roll, and world music. This dynamic transformation means that generation after generation enjoys the music. Bluegrass is also still performed in its more traditional form in addition to being an excellent basis for experimentation into new musical territory as seen in the music of David Grisman’s as well as in contemporary bluegrass and “Newgrass” styles.



David Grisman plays a tune. Still image from SPARK story, February 2005.

RESOURCES – TEXTS

David Grisman instruction book and CDs -
Homespun Tapes - <http://www.homespuntapes.com>

Artis, Bob. Bluegrass. Hawthorne Books

Cantwell, Robert. Bluegrass Breakdown: The Making of the Old Southern Sound. Da Capo Press; Reprint edition, September 1, 1992.

Erbsen, Wayne. Rural Roots of Bluegrass - Songs, Stories and History. Native Ground Music, 2003

Ewing, Tom. The Bill Monroe Reader. University of Illinois Press, 2000.

Hill, Fred. Grass Roots: An Illustrated History of Bluegrass and Mountain Music. Academy Books, 1981.

Rosenberg, Neil V. Bluegrass: A History. University of Illinois Press, 1993

Smith, Richard D. Bluegrass: An Informal Guide. Chicago Review Press, 1995

Smith, Richard D. Can't You Hear Me Callin'-The Life of Bill Monroe, Father of Bluegrass. Little, Brown and Company, 2000.

Wright, John. Traveling the High Way Home: Ralph Stanley and the World of Traditional Bluegrass Music. University of Illinois Press, reissue edition, 1995.

Zwonitzer, Mark with Charles Hirshberg. Will You Miss Me When I'm Gone--The Carter Family & Their Legacy in American Music. Simon & Schuster

PERIODICALS

Bluegrass Music Profile Magazine –
<http://www.bluegrassmusicprofiles.com>

Bluegrass Now
<http://www.bluegrassnow.com>

Bluegrass Unlimited - Info@bluegrassmusic.com –
<http://www.bluegrassmusic.com>

International Bluegrass – <http://www.ibma.org>

Dirty Linen - Office@dirtylinen.com –
<http://www.dirtylinen.com>

AUDIO RESOURCES – DAVID GRISMAN

See Grisman's Web Site for a complete listing of all the albums he has recorded and produced (an extensive number!) –
<http://www.dawgnet.com/discography.html>

Selected David Grisman & Quintet Recordings:
David Grisman Quintet. Kaleidoscope 1977
Hot Dawg. A&M Horizon 1979 Sp-731
Quintet '80. Warner Bros. 1980
Early Dawg. Sugar Hill 1981
Mondo Mando. Warner Bros. Bsk-3568
Zebra Acoustic. Zea - 42248 1982
Home Is Where The Heart Is. Rounder 0251/2 1988
Dawg '90. Acoustic Disc Acd-1 1990
Dawgwood. Acoustic Disc Acd-7 1993
Dawganova. Acoustic Disc Acd-17 1995
Dgq 20. Acoustic Disc Acd-20 1996
Jerry Garcia/David Grisman. Garcia/Grisman. Acoustic Disc Acd-2 199

DISCOGRAPHY – BLUEGRASS

Bill Monroe. Off The Record. Smithsonian/Folkways, 1993.

The Music of Bill Monroe. - A 4-CD set on MCA, including the best material from his entire career.

16 Gems. Columbia Records. - Includes the first true bluegrass with Flatt & Scruggs in the band.

Django Reinhardt. The Best of Django Reinhardt. Capitol, Blue Note Records, 1996.

Down From the Mountain: Live Concert Performances by the Artists & Musicians of "O Brother, Where Art Thou?" Live. Lost Highway, 2001.

Eric Thompson. Bluegrass Guitar. Kicking Mule Km-215 1980

Flatt & Scruggs: The Complete Mercury Sessions, Mercury Records.

Foggy Mountain Banjo.

Jacob do Bandolim. Mandolin Master of Brazil, Original Classic Recordings, Volumes I and II. Acoustic Disc, 1991. Reissue produced by David Grisman. Not bluegrass, but amazing Brazilian choro music played on mandolin.

Ralph Stanley. Cry From The Cross. Rebel.

Clinch Mountain Country features many guest stars from the bluegrass and country fields and exemplary fiddling from James Price. (Rebel)

Stanley Brothers. The Stanley Brothers and the Clinch Mountain Boys 1953-58 & 1959. - A two-disc CD set on the Bear Family label.

Various Artists. True Life Blues: Songs of Bill Monroe. Sugar Hill

Radio:

Bluegrass Signal Radio Show
Saturdays 6-7:30 PM on KALW, 91.7 FM
<http://www.kalw.org>

Internet Radio:

The Bluegrass Radio Network
<http://www.bluegrassradio.com>

Mountain Folk
The Radio Show for People Who Enjoy Bluegrass,
Folk & Mountain Music! -
<http://www.mountainfolk.com>

RESOURCES – WEB SITES

Official Web Site for David Grisman and his Dawgnet label, with concert listings, biography, merchandise, and links -
http://www.dawgnet.com/dgq_splash.html

SFBluegrass.org - Home of the San Francisco Bluegrass and Old Time Festival (February), and a site for listings of community events throughout the year - <http://www.sfbluegrass.org>

Discover Bluegrass – An organization dedicated to bluegrass, with good historical information on the genre - <http://www.discoverbluegrass.com>

Folkmusic.org - <http://www.folkmusic.org>

Mandolin Café - <http://www.mandolincafe.com>

Mandozine - <http://www.mandozine.com>

Mandolin Central - <http://www.mandolincentral.com>

Bluegrass Guitar - <http://www.bluegrassguitar.com>

Carmel Music - <http://www.carmelmusic.com>

Miles of Music – <http://www.milesofmusic.com>

International Bluegrass Music Association – An organization dedicated to bluegrass, with memberships, a periodical, industry awards, annual conference, information about bluegrass, merchandise, and educational materials -
<http://www.ibma.org>

Red River Valley Bluegrass Club -
<http://www.redrivervalley.iwebland.com>

VIDEO RESOURCES

Stefan Grossman <http://guitarvideos.com/>

Bill Monroe, Father of Bluegrass (OC-10013)

High Lonesome, The Story of Bluegrass Music (SHAN-604)

Ralph Stanley, by Herb E. Smith. Appalshop Film & Video, 800-545-7467

Down from the Mountain (O Brother, Where Art Thou? Concert) Artisan (UPC#12236123248)

Steve Parry & Eric Farnaus, Image Base, Chicago, Ill. Discover Bluegrass: Exploring American Roots Music. Produced by Greg Cahill & Nancy Cardwell. To order: Call Nancy Cardwell at IBMA (888) 438-4262, email nancyc@ibma.org, or order online: www.ibma.org. For ages 8-13.

Six instructional units, each roughly 10 minutes in length, explore the history and evolution of bluegrass music, starting with its old-time music roots and continuing through contemporary styles. Demonstrations include a look at the unique vocal harmony structure used in bluegrass music, along with info on the instruments used and their roles

within a band. Individual lesson plans for each unit are included, designed to address educational performance standards. Hosted by rising bluegrass artists Sierra Hull and Ryan Holladay.

BAY AREA FIELD TRIPS

Freight and Salvage Coffee House
1111 Addison Street
Berkeley, CA 94702
510/548.1761

A nonprofit community arts organization dedicated to promoting public awareness and understanding of traditional music -- music that is rooted in and expressive of the great variety of regional, ethnic, and social cultures of peoples throughout the world.
<http://www.thefreight.org>

Ashkenaz Music and Dance Community Center
1317 San Pablo Avenue
Berkeley, CA
510/525.5054

Ongoing music and dance performances - see their calendar of events for a complete listing.
<http://www.ashkenaz.com>

Down Home Music
10341 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA
510/525.2129

An awesome, small retail store specializing in American country, bluegrass and old time music, as well as Latin and world music sections. They often carry hard-to-find recordings and have a very knowledgeable staff.
<http://www.downhomemusic.com>

The Independent (music club)
628 Divisadero (between Grove & Hayes)
San Francisco CA 94117

The Atlas Cafe Bluegrass Series
Thursday nights, 8pm
Atlas Café
3049 20th Street @ Alabama Street (Mission District)
San Francisco, CA
<http://www.atlascafe.net>

JAMS

Baja Taqueria Bluegrass Jam
Mondays 8-11pm

Baja Taqueria
4070 Piedmont Avenue
Oakland, CA

Fifth String Music Store Bluegrass Jam
Thursdays 8pm
Fifth String Music Store
3051 Adeline Street
Berkeley, CA
510/548.8282

Merry Prankster Cafe Bluegrass Jam
Sunday afternoons & Wednesday nights,
Merry Prankster Café
8865 La Honda Rd (State Route 84)
La Honda, CA
650/747.0660

SECTION III – VOCABULARY

DISCIPLINE-BASED VOCABULARY AND CONCEPTS IN THE SPARK STORY

Acoustic

An instrument or performance whose sound is not amplified with the use of electronics

Aesthetic

Pertaining to the sense of beauty or to the criticism of taste

Ballad

A popular song usually of a romantic or sentimental nature

Banjo

A fretted stringed instrument probably of African origins, with a narrow neck and a hollow circular body with a stretched diaphragm of vellum beneath the bridge.

Baritone

A male singer's voice or a part written for such a voice, with a range higher than a bass and lower than a tenor

Bluegrass

A type of folk music that originated in the southern United States, typically played by a group of five or six musicians playing banjo, guitar, mandolin, fiddle, bass and sometimes dobro, and characterized by rapid tempos and jazz-like improvisation.

Bill Monroe

The father of bluegrass, famous for his distinctive voice, mandolin playing and style

“Dead Heads”

Dedicated fans of the group The Grateful Dead, who often traveled the country following the group's performances and tours

Fiddle

A violin used to play bluegrass and other forms of traditional American music

Gypsy Jazz

A style of music created by the musician and guitar player Django Reinhardt, a French Gypsy or *sinto*. Reinhardt played jazz with his own distinct stylistics – high velocity and an intense swing with melodic and harmonic elements unique to the Romany traditions.

Harmonic

Of or pertaining to musical harmony as distinguished from melody or rhythm. Also, a tone produced on a stringed instrument by lightly touching an open or stopped vibrating string at a given fraction of its length so that both segments vibrate. On wind instruments, harmonic overtones can be created by over-blowing on a fundamental note.

Historical Reissue

A reproduction/reprinting of a recording that has historical value

Instrumentalist

A musician who plays on instruments rather than sings

Jazz

A traditional American music genre that emerged at the turn of the 20th century, first played in the South by black bands, characterized by a strong but flexible rhythmic understructure with solo and ensemble improvisations on basic tunes and chord patterns, and, in more recent years, a sophisticated harmonic idiom.

Mandolin

Descended from the lute, the mandolin usually has a pear-shaped body and a fretted neck over which several pairs of strings are stretched.

Mixing Board

Used to record music, a mixing board is a panel that is outfitted with slides, buttons, dials and other controllers in order to control all aspects of sound as they are recorded, including dynamics, timbre, fading sounds in and out, and altering the sounds electronically.

Nurture

To foster, cultivate, nourish or bring up.

Oral Tradition

The act of passing on information or history through oral means, such as storytelling or music

Produce

In the music business, to produce a record is to create a record, but a producer is not the person necessarily making the music, rather s/he is the one who has important responsibilities regarding the artistic direction and sometimes the financing of the album.

Purveyor

A distributor or someone dispenses something.

Quintet

An ensemble with five people

Resurgent

Rising, sweeping or surging again

Swing

A high energy jazz music and dance genre from the 1930s and 40s that grew out of the hot jazz orchestras of the 20s, characterized by its orchestrations for big bands, it featured generally simpler harmonic and rhythmic patterns that were easy to dance to.

Tenor

A male singer's voice or a vocal part in a composition written for such as voice whose range is higher than a baritone and lower than an alto

SECTION IV – ENGAGING WITH SPARK

STANDARDS-BASED ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION POINTS

Developing Aural Skills

Select some recordings from the resource section. Choose different genres including bluegrass songs both traditional and more recent Grisman albums, plus examples of a work song or lullaby (see the O Brother Where Art Thou? soundtrack called Down From the Mountain). Play three songs for the class and discuss what they hear. Can they identify what kind of song it might be? Where do they think the music comes from? Play the tunes again and work with students to identify the instrumentation. Make a game of “name that tune or instrument” by playing back the songs again and challenging students to correctly name the instruments and type of song. Further the exercise by analyzing the parts of each song, such as the introduction, or if it is in AB form, or if there is any call and response. Also identify the role of each instrument, indicating who creates the supporting rhythmic and harmonic structure and who has a more melodic function, taking solos or improvising.

Watch the Spark episode on American Music and stop the playback when you reach an image of the performers on stage at the Freight and Salvage. See if students can identify the instruments they see. Can they guess what each instrument will sound like? For instance, the bass is very large, will it sound higher or lower than the mandolin? Continue watching but with the sound off, can they tell who is taking a solo just by watching? Does it look like they are playing fast or slow? Then watch it again with the sound on to see if their predictions were correct. If possible, bring in pictures of instruments or the instruments themselves to play for the class, so that they can hear what each individual instrument sounds like.

Considering Oral Traditions

Oral traditions are passed on without written notes, books or scores. Break up the class into different groups. Have each group research the history of a different oral tradition in the United States, selecting from the music of the South, including bluegrass, Appalachian music and dance, blues, jazz, fife and drum bands or any others that you discover. Have students present their findings to the class in the form of an oral presentation or as a short theatrical skit. Help them to find recording samples that they could use to assist them in the telling of their findings.

Explore such themes such as the historical perspective, the socio-political environment surrounding the genre, the role of the music, the content of the songs (i.e., gospel, love, death, train songs, lullabies, work songs or instrumental verses sung), and the structure of the music.

RELATED STANDARDS

MUSIC

Grade 1 – Artistic Perception

1.2 Identify simple musical forms (e.g. phrase, AB, echo)

1.3 Identify common instruments visually and aurally in a variety of music.

Grade 8 - Historical and Cultural Context

3.4 Compare and contrast the distinguishing characteristics of musical genres and styles from a variety of cultures.

Grade 5 – Historical and Cultural Context

3.1 Describe the social functions of a variety of musical forms from various cultures and time periods.

Grade 8 – Historical and Cultural Context

3.2 Identify and explain the influences of various cultures on music in early United States history.

Sparklers!

* Learn a song in three-part harmony

Listen to some of the recording samples from the discography and select some songs that are appropriate for your class to learn. If you or some students play guitar, accompany your class as they learn the three-part harmonies.

* Fans

The Grateful Dead and their followers, “Dead Heads” became a part of the counter-culture in the folk and pop music world. Conduct research into the phenomenon of “fans” and the idea of dedicating oneself to following bands like the Grateful Dead across the country for months and even years.

* Transcribe a solo

Practice your transcription skills by playing excerpts of bluegrass tunes and listening in to one instrument at a time. Transcribe a mandolin or fiddle solo.

Create a radio drama

Use the setting of Depression era Kentucky and the rise of radio as the backdrop for a radio drama that your class creates.

First research the time period and the history of radio. Discuss how radio impacted peoples’ lives during the Depression. Perhaps even watch the movie “O Brother Where Art Thou?” for inspiration. Then examine the history of country or mountain music. Use this as a basis for a storyline that your students create and develop into a radio drama complete with sound recordings, sound effects and old time commercials. Students could even dress up in period style clothes if it assists in setting the mood. Record and present to other classes.

Follow up the activity with a written assignment exploring students’ reactions to the assignment. What did they learn from the experience? Name five things that they discovered about the time period, music and economic climate.

RELATED STANDARDS

MEDIA LITERACY

Principle 8 – Analyze the effect that specific media have had on a particular issue or topic historically and/or across different cultures.

Music

Grades 9-12 – Historical and Cultural Context

3.1 Identify the sources of musical genres of the United States, trace the evolution of those genres, and cite well-known musicians associated with them.

3.3 Describe the differences between styles in traditional folk genres within the United States

Grades 9-12 – Connections, Relationships, Applications

5.2 Analyze the role and function of music in radio, television and advertising.

RELATED STANDARDS

MUSIC

Grade 6 – Aesthetic Valuing

4.1 Develop criteria for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of musical performances and compositions, including arrangements and improvisations, and apply the criteria in personal listening and performing.

Grade 8– Artistic Perception

1.3 Transcribe aural examples into rhythmic and melodic notation.

1.7 Explain how musical elements are used to create specific music events in given aural examples.

Grades 9-12, Creative Expression, Proficient

2.4 Perform on an instrument a repertoire of instrumental literature representing various genres, styles, and cultures with expression, technical accuracy, tone quality and articulation, by oneself and in ensembles.

Aesthetic Valuing

4.1 Develop specific criteria for making informed critical evaluations of the quality and effectiveness of performances, compositions, arrangements, and improvisations and apply those criteria in personal participation in music.

Mondo Mando

David Grisman states that one of the things that drew him to bluegrass was its opportunity for individualism and self-expression. Grisman sought out his own style, fusing elements of jazz, swing, and gypsy into his playing style, creating an entirely new sound. Because of it, it began to be called “Dawg” music, and reflected a modern bluegrass sentiment, that allowed for the inclusion of other musical art forms.

Have students listen to three different recordings from the resource list that feature mandolin and a traditional bluegrass lineup but from different time periods. Compare and contrast the styles from a music perspective, analyzing specific stylistic differences such as ornamentation, the use of complex or jazz harmonies and chords, and “signature” stylings, such as the repeated use of a certain interval to end a phrase, that lets the listener know who’s playing. Analyze and compare the differences between the sounds of the bands. Challenge students to analyze harmonic and chord progressions, form, vocal style. Transcribe different mandolin solos.

Once they have completed this task, have them discuss their findings with the class. Can students identify the band or individual solely on the basis of a solo or on a short excerpt played back to them? What makes someone unique? Which recordings do they like the best and why? If there are proficient players in the class, see if they can play different transcribed solos demonstrating different styles, even if they are playing on other instruments than the original recording. Have students read each other’s transcriptions to see how accurate they are. Play along with the recording as well as without.

For more information about SPARK and its educational content, including the Visual & Performing Arts Standards, visit the Web site at <http://www.kqed.org/spark/education>.



For more information about the California Visual & Performing Arts Standards, visit the CA Dept. of Education at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/index.asp>.