



The United States Army Field Band

In My Dream

A Celebration of African-American Music

IN MY DREAM: COLLEGE MUSIC APPRECIATION LESSON PLAN #2 JAZZ FORMS AND IMPROVISATION

OBJECTIVES: Students will learn about traditional early-jazz instrumentation and performance and gain an understanding of AABA song form.
Students will learn about some different components of big-band arranging within a modern jazz rendition of a “standard” song and learn about the typical instrumentation used in big band performance.
Students will learn about the significance Louis Armstrong had on the advancement of trumpet as a solo instrument

MATERIALS:

- *In My Dream*: track 11 (“When It’s Sleepy Time Down South”)
- Recording of Louis Armstrong performing his own composition “When It’s Sleepy Time Down South” (many quality recordings are available of this standard)
- Audio playback equipment
- Chalkboard and chalk

PROCEDURES:

1. Play the original Armstrong recording and discuss the instrumentation and performance practices of each instrument. List them on the chalkboard.
2. In group or teacher-led discussion, describe the band personnel and their respective instruments; roles, styles etc...
3. Identify the meaning of AABA song form; play the Armstrong example and identify each section as it progresses—pause, discuss, and repeat as necessary. Describe each section on the board according to the students’ own descriptions.
4. Play the *In My Dream* example and discuss as a class; how does it differ from the original Armstrong recording? What characteristics/musical aspects do the two recordings share?
5. Discuss instrumentation, number of sections, its form (AABA or not?), and its various deviations and differences. Encourage your students to listen to more than just the melody.
6. Have your students list similarities between the following: traditional meets modern, small group vs. big band instrumentation, and instruments’ roles (individually and by section).
7. Discuss the performance of Louis Armstrong in his original recording and the significance of his technical and musical mastery. Note his many contributions to broadening the musical spectrum on the trumpet and his overall impact on Jazz music.
8. Briefly, list some of the great trumpeters that followed in Armstrong’s footsteps or paid homage to this master: Dizzy Gillespie, Doc Severinson, Wynton Marsalis.

EXPLORATION:

1. In future lessons explore in greater detail the different styles on modern Big Band writing - citing the bands of Ellington, Basie, Herman and others...
2. Discuss the impact jazz has made on the 20th century and beyond; how is it constantly evolving into new directions?
3. What are the elements that make jazz a truly American art form?

ASSESSMENT:

1. Administer a short quiz about the contributions of Louis Armstrong and identify the instruments that make up his small group.
2. Have your students aurally describe/identify AABA song form and describe how a modern arrangement might elaborate on this form.
3. Quiz the students on big band instrumentation and instrument roles within the ensemble and the given arrangement; using an unfamiliar arrangement may help in reinforcing these ideas.

NATIONAL STANDARDS, FOR HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS WHO MAY WISH TO ADAPT THIS LESSON FOR THEORY/COMPOSITION OR ADVANCED GENERAL MUSIC CLASSES*:

6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performances.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

**From National Standards for Arts Education. Copyright © 1994 by Music Educators National Conference (MENC). Used by permission. The complete National Arts Standards and additional materials relating to the Standards are available from MENC—The National Association for Music Education, 1806 Robert Fulton Drive, Reston, VA 20191.*