

Nobel School Illustrated Curriculum The Music-Culture Connection
A Guide Developed by the DePaul Center for Urban Education

The Culture Quarter: Idea/Inference Connections

Second quarter will be the music connections quarter for the arts integration initiative at Nobel. The quarter should include five workshops for teachers after school. Teacher workshops will develop teachers' ability to help students listen to music more meaningfully. The workshops will develop teachers' ability to relate music that students hear and write to understanding a culture.

To keep the project replicable, the approach emphasizes elements of music that students "read" as they listen and then write. That is, for example, how do lyrics communicate ideas about a culture? Emphasizing the words—the lyrics—will be the most replicable approach.

Teachers may decide to focus on one idea such as that music represents the values of a culture and then examine that idea with one culture or a number of cultures. Or teachers may have students learn about different cultures in one area of the world, giving each student team a different culture to profile. Or teachers may organize a culture study in which students examine one culture in depth.

Students should get information about the culture through reading books and listening to texts that are read aloud and by listening to music that represents the culture.

The Writing Connection

Then students should write about the culture. As established in the first quarter, that writing can—and should—be pictures as well as words, sentence, paragraphs.

In the music quarter, the students should expand their repertoire of writing to include writing songs.

The Inference Emphasis

The "reading" of music requires that students analyze songs and make inferences. It should strengthen their inferential ability.

To increase their ability to use symbolic language, encourage students to write songs that include words that represent more than their literal meaning.

The Visual Symbol

Students should read and create symbols of culture.

