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# THE WHITE HOUSE

## *In Tune With History*

### *Dear Educator:*

Music is a significant barometer of American culture, and the exciting documentary, *The White House: In Tune with History*—airing on your local PBS affiliate on Presidents' Day, February 17, 2003—offers students a fascinating look at how America's history and culture have been reflected in the singularly historic performances by artists chosen to appear at the White House. Each artist has been celebrated not only for his or her accomplishments, but also because their music made an important statement about America's rich musical heritage and the legacy it offers to future generations.

The White House Historical Association (WHHA) and Youth Media International (YMI) are pleased to bring you this special educational program based on this film. The material may be used with or without seeing *The White House: In Tune with History*; however, student learning will be enhanced by viewing it.

Students will be captivated by the stories told through the vivid personal insights of a variety of musicians, historians and first families. Viewers will gain a unique historical perspective of the White House and heads of state as they respond to musical performances at the White House. Students will discover the history of "Hail to the Chief," meet the U.S. Marine Band, and experience the human side of the families who have called the White House home—where First Lady Betty Ford's

dream of dancing with Fred Astaire came true, and where a president known for his stiff and formal manner won over a roomful of musicians with his deft turn at the piano.

This teaching program and activities incorporate proposed national standards for music, history and social studies for students at the middle, junior and senior high levels. The WHHA's Web site, [www.whitehousehistory.org](http://www.whitehousehistory.org), also offers a wealth of information for further exploration of music in the White House through its timeline link, as well as a host of other White House topics. We are confident this program will bring your students closer to America's musical diversity.

Although these materials are copyrighted, you may make as many photocopies as necessary to suit the needs of your students. Feel free to share these materials with fellow educators.

Sincerely,

Roberta Nusim  
 Publisher  
 Youth Media International

Neil W. Horstman  
 President, White House  
 Historical Association

### RESOURCES

*Musical Highlights from the White House*, by Elise K. Kirk.  
 Krieger Publishing Company, Malabar, FL, 1992.

White House Historical Association:  
[www.whitehousehistory.org](http://www.whitehousehistory.org)

U.S. Marine Band: [www.marineband.usmc.mil](http://www.marineband.usmc.mil)

The documentary film *The White House: In Tune with History* is produced by the White House Historical Association and John Goberman in association with WETA Washington, D.C. The broadcast presentation of the film is made possible by the Annenberg Foundation in support of the WETA Program Trust.

The teaching guide is sponsored by the White House Historical Association, P.O. Box 27624, Washington, D.C. 20038-7624. Contact: [edu@whha.org](mailto:edu@whha.org).



## TARGET AUDIENCE

This program is designed for middle, junior and senior high school students in social studies, American history and music.

## PROGRAM COMPONENTS



- This 6-panel teacher's guide
- Three reproducible student activity masters

## HOW THIS PROGRAM SUPPORTS THE VOLUNTARY NATIONAL EDUCATION STANDARDS FOR GRADES 7-12

This curriculum guide supports many objectives of the Voluntary National Education Standards for students in grades 7-12 in the areas of History, Social Sciences and Music Education. You can learn more about the National Education Standards at <http://www.education-world.com/standards>.

## HOW TO USE THIS TEACHER'S GUIDE

Review all the materials (including the video if you have it) and fit them into your existing lesson plans. Reproduce and distribute each activity master. Depending on the ages and abilities of your students, each activity will require between two to three classroom sessions. Unless otherwise noted, students will need one master and pencils or pens in order to complete each activity. Any additional materials are noted.

**Teaching Key**— indicates middle and junior high levels;  indicates senior high level.

If you are using this program in conjunction with viewing the television special or video, you may use the activity masters either before or after seeing it. Each master has a **Tuning In** section linked to the documentary itself, with answers provided in this guide. The **My Musical Opinion** section offers students an opportunity to apply learning to classroom or home assignments and to share their work with classmates.

# MUSIC WITH A MESSAGE



ACTIVITY 1

**SKILLS/CONCEPTS COVERED:** Reading, exploring political, cultural and social issues in American history, inference, deducing and applying information, group discussion, creating a timeline, research and self-expression through writing

## ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED:

History reference books, materials from your school or public library, computers

**Tuning In ANSWER:** A “musical” is a social gathering that features a short concert. Musicales were held at the White House throughout the 19th century, but Theodore and Edith Roosevelt wanted to project an image of the White House as a place of grandeur and a showcase for America’s arts. Mrs. Roosevelt expanded the importance and frequency of the musicales, treating her guests to spectacular performances by the greatest musicians of the time.

**PART A.** Review directions with students.  Lead students in a group discussion of the issues, years and presidents, or provide reference materials for the answers.  Use the group discussion approach, or have students determine issues independently and use reference materials for the remaining research.

## ANSWERS—PERFORMERS, ISSUES, YEARS, PRESIDENTS

**Issue Identification Key**—(P) political, (C) cultural, (S) social

1. Hutchinson Family Singers: **P,C,S**—slavery and women’s rights (1844, John Tyler).
2. U.S. Marine Band: **P,C**—the divided nation during the Civil War. Lincoln used music to heal the nation’s spirit and attempt to reunite the North (“The Battle Hymn of the Republic”) and the South (“Dixie”) (1865, Abraham Lincoln).
3. Marian Anderson: **P,C,S**—civil rights of the nation’s African Americans (1939, Franklin D. and Eleanor Roosevelt).
4. Pablo Casals: **P**—freedom in America vs. fascism in Spain. **C,S**—an increased role for the arts in American society (1961, John F. Kennedy).
5. Itzhak Perlman/Egyptian guitarists: **P**—efforts toward

establishing peace in the Middle East with Jimmy Carter, Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat (1979, Jimmy Carter).



6. Arthur Nevin: **P,C,S**—the rights and culture of Native Americans. Roosevelt supported the preservation of Native American culture, despite Congress’s opposition (1907, Theodore Roosevelt).



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Dizzy Gillespie

**PART B.** The WHHA Web site at [www.whitehousehistory.org](http://www.whitehousehistory.org) offers help to students in completing their timelines (see *History* on the home page, then click on *Timeline*, and then on *Music* and/or *African Americans*).

 Direct students to view the following decades on the timelines: *Music*—1850s, 1870s, 1880s, 1930s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s; *African Americans*—1890s and 1930s.  Direct students to read all of the decades in both categories to find the specific references to performances. Now lead a class discussion based on the timeline follow-up question, then direct students to create posters illustrating their opinions.

## BRIEF TIMELINE OF AFRICAN AMERICAN PERFORMANCES IN THE WHITE HOUSE

- 1859—Thomas Green (“Blind Tom”) Bethune, pianist (James Buchanan)
- 1878—Diva Marie (“Selike”) Williams, soprano (Rutherford B. Hayes)
- 1882—Fisk Jubilee Singers, spiritual choir (Chester Arthur)
- 1939—Marian Anderson, contralto (Franklin D. Roosevelt)
- 1961—Mahalia Jackson, gospel vocalist (John F. Kennedy)
- 1974—Pearl Bailey, vocalist (Richard Nixon)
- 1987—Lionel Hampton, vibraphonist (Ronald Reagan)
- 1998—Aretha Franklin, rhythm and blues singer (Bill Clinton)
- 2001—Regina Belle, vocalist (George W. Bush)

## EXTENDED ACTIVITIES

- Direct students to the WHHA *Music* timeline to determine issues represented by the work of other performers. What other minorities or groups of performers have been represented? Are some of these issues similar to issues of today?
- Have students choose an African-American artist from the timeline and create a profile of this performer’s career.

# MUSIC BUILDS THE BRIDGE

ACTIVITY 2

**SKILLS/CONCEPTS COVERED:** Reviewing presidential terms of office, deducing and synthesizing information, identification of American musical styles and corresponding musical instruments, group discussion and self-expression through writing

**ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED:** Chalk and chalkboard, computers, collection of presidential and American history reference materials from your school or public library

**Tuning In ANSWER:** In 1969, President Richard Nixon awarded jazz great Duke Ellington the Presidential Medal of Freedom, an award established by President John F. Kennedy to help boost the role of the arts in America. Although jazz had long been performed at the White House, this marked the first time that jazz was given such a high and official honor.

**PART A.** First, help students list on the chalkboard American musical styles and some instruments used in their performance. **Possible Answers:** classical (piano, flute, bass, violin), folk (guitar, dulcimer, banjo), jazz (saxophone, trombone, drums), country (guitar, mandolin), blues (piano, trumpet), ragtime (piano, banjo, drums), rock (electric guitar, electric bass, drums), spiritual/gospel (piano, a cappella voice), etc.

Remind students how some of these styles have been a part of special, ceremonial events that they themselves have attended, such as graduations, weddings, funerals, and ball games. Presidents, too, have used musical diversity to make a transition from politics and business to a more relaxed setting for White House guests.

♪ Read each “voice” and help students determine how the clues can be used to identify the mystery president (e.g., the Voice #1 reference to ragtime music dates this presidential term to the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century). Students may then use reference books for help. ♪♪ Have students find clues independently, then explain how they identified the four presidents.

**ANSWERS**—Voice #1: William McKinley (1897-1901); Voice #2: Richard Nixon (1969-1974); Voice #3: Herbert Hoover (1929-1933); Voice #4: Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909). **Note:** The famous “Gold Steinway” piano referred to by Theodore Roosevelt’s voice was donated to the White House in January 1903, establishing this reception room as a focal point for the performing arts.

**PART B.** Direct students to the WHHA Web site’s *Music* timeline to create presidential “voices.” Assign students to a particular decade and have them work individually or in teams. Your school or public librarian may help identify particular schools and songs. An excellent source is *Musical Highlights from the White House*, by Elise K. Kirk (1992).

**Note:** For **My Musical Opinion**, ask students to review both the list of musical styles created at the beginning of this activity and any additional styles discovered in completing **Part A**. Challenge them to be creative with their titles, e.g., a headline for jazz might read “Smooth Sounds in the East Room.”

## EXTENDED ACTIVITIES

- Ask students to research the history of musical instruments in the White House, including the “Gold Steinway” piano.
- Have students research how many presidents have been musicians themselves.

# THE PRESIDENT’S OWN— THE U.S. MARINE BAND

ACTIVITY 3

**SKILLS/CONCEPTS COVERED:** History of the U.S. Marine Band and its connection to the White House, reading, synthesizing information and self-expression through writing

**Tuning In ANSWER:** President James Polk was of small stature and tended not to be noticed when he arrived at a formal event. Mrs. Polk ordered the U.S. Marine Band to play “Hail to the Chief” whenever President Polk arrived at special events in order to silence the audience.

**PART A.** Review and discuss the directions with students. ♪ Lead students to determine together whether they agree or disagree with each statement and to determine the order and/or structure of their paragraphs. ♪♪ Students may complete the statements independently, then review answers together before they write their own paragraphs.

## ANSWERS TO AGREE/DISAGREE STATEMENTS:

1. **Agree.** Sousa, 26 when he assumed directorship, brought discipline and an expanded repertoire to the band.
2. **Disagree.** The first women joined the band during the Nixon administration. They now number 40.
3. **Disagree.** The U.S. Marine Band’s first White House performance was for President and Mrs. John Adams as they hosted a New Year’s Day reception in 1801.
4. **Agree.** Members of the U.S. Marine Band received, at most, \$34 per month for their services at this time. Congress nearly abolished the band during the Grant years because of the rising cost of instruments and the request for greater pay. A rally by Congressman Charles Harrison of Illinois helped save this grand tradition.
5. **Agree.** Today, there are more than a dozen musical units within the band, ranging from Jazz Combo to Woodwind Quartet. The band accompanies many guest artists at White House performances.
6. **Disagree.** Bands were an American craze at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Up to 5,000 people attended U.S. Marine Band concerts during the McKinley years.
7. **Agree.** The commander who wrote the instrument order thought the price of \$180 was “too high.”
8. **Disagree.** Thomas Jefferson gave the band its nickname of “The President’s Own.”
9. **Disagree.** Military bands have European origins that pre-date the founding of the U.S. In fact, some original members of the U.S. Marine Band were born and trained in European countries.
10. **Agree.** The band’s first regular public performances began during the Tyler administration but, because of crowd control issues, this ended with the Hoovers.

**PART B.** After students work on their own, tell them that *every* song on the list has actually been played by the U.S. Marine Band.

## EXTENDED ACTIVITIES

- Students may research the life of John Philip Sousa, examining his contributions to the U.S. Marine Band and American culture.
- Direct students to the Marine Band Web site (<http://www.marineband.usmc.mil>) and have them decide what they think are the best and worst parts of being a member of the band.



# MUSIC WITH A MESSAGE

The White House was built by democracy—and sings of freedom and tradition. In showcasing American music, its styles and performers, American presidents for more than 200 years have used music as a way to connect themselves and the White House with the American people.

**PART A.** By choosing music for White House performances, each president expresses social, cultural and political issues of the times. Some historical musical performances at the White House are listed below. Follow your teacher's directions to write the issues represented or expressed by the music and performer, then fill in the year from the list below and name the president.

## Tuning In

Which administration paved the way for the White House to become the prestigious showcase for music that it is today?

### PERFORMERS AND ISSUES

**1.** Hutchinson Family Singers—The president invites a family of folk singers whose songs express a true Yankee spirit of anti-slavery and support for the woman's suffrage movement.

Issue: \_\_\_\_\_

Year: \_\_\_\_\_ President: \_\_\_\_\_

**2.** U.S. Marine Band—At the close of a bitter war, the president orders the band to perform both "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and "Dixie" to signal, through common musical expression, that both sides could once again find unity.

Issue: \_\_\_\_\_

Year: \_\_\_\_\_ President: \_\_\_\_\_

**3.** Marian Anderson—The president and first lady ignore segregationists who criticize them for inviting the great African American contralto to sing for King George VI and Queen Elizabeth of England.

Issue: \_\_\_\_\_

Year: \_\_\_\_\_ President: \_\_\_\_\_

**4.** Pablo Casals—The president and first lady make the arts one of their top priorities by inviting this renowned Spanish cellist to perform. Casals, who had silenced his cello to protest fascism in his country, accepts the invitation. The president proclaims that Casals' art stands as a symbol of human freedom.

Issue: \_\_\_\_\_

Year: \_\_\_\_\_ President: \_\_\_\_\_

**5.** Itzhak Perlman and an Egyptian guitar trio—The president brokers an historic peace treaty between two Middle East nations. These representatives of the countries involved help to celebrate the triumph of the moment.

Issue: \_\_\_\_\_

Year: \_\_\_\_\_ President: \_\_\_\_\_

**6.** Arthur Nevin—The president invites this composer to showcase a version of his *Poia*, an opera based on Native American music, at a time when Congress directs the Indian Bureau in Washington to destroy all things pertaining to the Native American civilization.

Issue: \_\_\_\_\_

Year: \_\_\_\_\_ President: \_\_\_\_\_

**YEAR LIST:** 1939, 1865, 1844, 1979, 1907, 1961

**PART B.** Marian Anderson's performance at the Franklin Roosevelt White House was not the first by an African American. Find out more by visiting the White House

Historical Association's Web site at [www.whitehousehistory.org](http://www.whitehousehistory.org) and follow your teacher's instructions to complete a timeline of these historic performances. Some examples are listed.

### BRIEF TIMELINE OF AFRICAN AMERICAN PERFORMANCES AT THE WHITE HOUSE

_____	Marian Anderson	_____	_____
_____	contralto	_____	_____
_____	(Franklin D. Roosevelt)	_____	_____
_____	1939	_____	_____
_____	1961	_____	_____
_____	Mahalia Jackson	_____	_____
_____	gospel vocalist	_____	_____
_____	(John F. Kennedy)	_____	_____
_____	2001	_____	_____
_____	Regina Belle	_____	_____
_____	vocalist	_____	_____
_____	George W. Bush	_____	_____

What role do you think the White House has played in creating awareness and acceptance of African American music among all Americans? Do you think more could have been done? Why or why not? Share your ideas with your classmates.



## MY MUSICAL OPINION

- Listen to some favorite CDs. Decide which lyrics speak about social, political or cultural issues of today. If you were president, which performer would you invite to appear at the White House? Whom would you invite to listen? Write about the issues his or her music represents.
- At which African American White House performance would you most like to have been present? Why?



# MUSIC BUILDS THE BRIDGE

The diversity of American music has been the backdrop for many formal events at the White House. A variety of musical styles and performances has helped presidents set a comfortable tone in making the transition from the official side of the job to the more human side—strengthening relationships or enjoying an evening with important national and/or world figures.

*Tuning In*  
When was jazz first recognized officially by the White House? What was the event and who was the performer?

**PART A.** Read the following series of historical presidential “voices,” each reflecting on a musical performance at the White House. Use clues within the statements to determine the voice’s identity. Then determine each president’s term of office.

## VOICES

1. My, how times are beginning to change! Mind you, I was the first president to invite a serious chamber music ensemble to perform at the White House. And we thought the waltz performances were lovely, but when the musicians played “Goo Goo Eyes” at today’s Valentine’s Day Dance it was wonderful to see my guests dance the two-step to its daring rag-time rhythms.

Who Am I? \_\_\_\_\_ Term of Office \_\_\_\_\_

2. My administration’s musical guest lists have been criticized by the media for being “too bland.” But I’d have to say I have showcased them all—from jazz great Duke Ellington and opera sensation Andre Watts to the legendary country singer Johnny Cash, and from the amazing classical pianist Van Cliburn to tonight’s performance by Frank Sinatra.

Who Am I? \_\_\_\_\_ Term of Office \_\_\_\_\_

3. I have loved hearing string orchestras such as The Cappella, dazzling pianists such as Vladimir Horowitz, and the Hampton and Tuskegee black choirs perform here at the White House. But we must try to recognize these especially hard times with more music like that we heard tonight—dulcimer players and folk singers. This is the music that echoes the feeling of the American people as these difficult economic times persist.

Who Am I? \_\_\_\_\_ Term of Office \_\_\_\_\_

4. The first lady has worked so hard to arrange these musicals. But tonight’s performance will be truly grand. And I mean that in every sense of the word! This new concert grand piano donated to the White House by the Steinway Company is actually gold-leafed—and the designs are marvelous to behold! It fits in beautifully with the décor here in the East Room. I cannot wait to hear all the great pianists—Busoni, Rachmaninoff, Hofmann and Paderewski—play our one-of-a-kind “Gold Steinway.”

Who Am I? \_\_\_\_\_ Term of Office \_\_\_\_\_



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*Duke Ellington accepts the Medal of Freedom from President Richard Nixon.*

**PART B.** Now it’s your turn to create the “voices!” Visit the Web site of the White House Historical Association at [www.whitehousehistory.org](http://www.whitehousehistory.org). Follow your teacher’s directions as you read the *Music* timeline, then create two presidential “voices” from two different decades.



PGM Productions, Inc.

*Tuning the piano in the East Room. Pictured is the Steinway presented to the White House in 1938 that replaced the earlier “Gold Steinway.”*

Voice #1 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who Am I? \_\_\_\_\_

Voice #2 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who Am I? \_\_\_\_\_

## MY MUSICAL OPINION



Follow your teacher’s direction to complete this section:

■ Review the categories of musical styles represented in White House performances. Choose three different styles and pretend you are a newspaper reporter assigned to a regular column reviewing the latest musical event hosted by the president and first lady. Write a headline for each performance you have seen. (Be sure to make the headline fit the musical style!)



# THE PRESIDENT'S OWN— THE U.S. MARINE BAND

**PART A.** The U.S. Marine Band is an honored group of military musicians that regularly plays for the president at a variety of formal occasions both inside and outside of the White House. See how much you know about this group. Read this series of statements and write “A” if you agree or “D” if you disagree with each of them.

1. John Philip Sousa was the first American-born leader of the band. \_\_\_\_
2. Women first joined the band during the Eisenhower administration. \_\_\_\_
3. George Washington’s inaugural marked the U.S. Marine Band’s first White House performance. \_\_\_\_
4. During the Grant administration band members nearly all resigned because of low wages. \_\_\_\_
5. With 143 musicians, the U.S. Marine Band is the nation’s oldest musical organization, playing at the White House more than 300 times a year. \_\_\_\_
6. The American public had no interest in band music at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This was the least popular time for the U.S. Marine Band. \_\_\_\_
7. The first instruments in the band included the oboe, clarinet, French horn, bassoon and bass drum. \_\_\_\_
8. John Quincy Adams was the first president to give the U.S. Marine Band the nickname, “The President’s Own.” \_\_\_\_
9. Military bands are an original American concept and the U.S. Marine Band is the country’s first example of this. \_\_\_\_
10. The U.S. Marine Band once played regular Saturday concerts free to the public on the White House lawn. \_\_\_\_

*Tuning In*

Why did First Lady Sarah Polk use “Hail to the Chief” to mark the official entry of President James Polk into a room?

Use this space to write a paragraph about the importance of the U.S. Marine Band, incorporating information you learned from at least five of the statements above.

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**PART B.**

Look at the song list below. For each, write why you do or do not think that song has been played by the U.S. Marine Band.

**SONG LIST**

- “The Star-Spangled Banner” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- “Maple Leaf Rag” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- “Hail to the Chief” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- “The Stars and Stripes Forever” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- “Yankee Doodle Dandy” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- “Blue Danube” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- “Blue Moon” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- “Take the A Train” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Mozart’s “Symphony No. 35” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- “Can You Feel the Love Tonight?” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- “Phantom of the Opera” \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## MY MUSICAL OPINION



Follow your teacher’s direction to complete this section:

- If, like the president, you had your own band to provide background music to your life, what songs would your band play? What events would they mark?
- The time is the Lincoln administration. The event is one of the U.S. Marine Band’s regular public performances on the White House lawn. Pretend you are in the crowd. What do you see? How does the music sound? How does the crowd react? What is your impression of “The President’s Own”? Write a letter to a friend describing your experience.