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EDUCATOR ENGAGEMENT GUIDE

Wade Fernandez

 PBS Wisconsin
Education



Educator Engagement Guide

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Table of Contents

Musician Information	3
Learning Goals	3
Elements of Music	3
Instruments	4
Lyrics	4
Outcomes, Strategies and Assessments	5
Skill Outcome, Strategies and Assessments	5
Knowledge Outcome, Strategies and Assessments	6
Affective Outcome, Strategies and Assessment	6
Extensions	7
Standards Addressed	9
WMEA Standards	9
DPI Standards	9
Resources	9

Musician Information

Musician Name: Wade Fernandez

Song: [“Sawaenemiyah” \(“We Are Blessed”\)](#)

Cultural Identity: Menominee (Wisconsin First Nations)

Biography:

Wade Fernandez (Walks With The Black Wolf) is an award-winning touring artist from the Menominee Nation Reservation in Northeastern Wisconsin. Fernandez's music incorporates many genres, including blues, rock, jazz, country, folk, flamenco, and more. Early in his career he opened for acts like Jackson Browne and the Indigo Girls, which has led to a long career with many international tours. His passion is to share his spirit and culture, and to honor Grandmother Earth through composing, performing, and teaching music.

For musician photos please see the resources section later in this guide.

Learning Goals

By using project resources learners will:

1. Explore connections between music, identities, cultures and emotions.
 2. Recognize shared and unique elements of distinct pieces of music.
 3. Relate content to personal experiences choosing, playing and sharing music.
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Elements of Music

Melody - mostly step wise, narrow range of pitches with much repetition

Rhythm - steady beat with mostly quarter and eighth notes, some syncopation

Harmony - vocal and guitar accompaniment

Texture/Timbre - melody and accompaniment of voice and guitar

Form - introduction, AABA, Coda with refrain(s) in each section

Expression - piano to mezzo piano dynamics, smooth phrasing

Instruments

1. Acoustic guitar
 2. Native flute
 3. Electric guitar
 4. Voice
 5. Hand Drum
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Lyrics

“Sawaenemiyah”

Nicianosaeh Whapi-Mahwaewsae, Maecewatok somekoh
Nicianosaeh Waqsepaekecewin, Penesew mesek wahkamiw
Kemewenukiw
Pon kekatow kipackiyaenemem, Kespentaeh
Sawaenemiyah

Nicianosaeh Awaesaeh Oskas, Maecewatok kemenen kaekoh
Nicianosaeh Awaesaeh Nepowaew, Kaec menikew
Kemewenukiw
Pon kekatow kipackiyaenemem, Kespentaeh,
Sawaehnemiyah

Naqsnwi anakkok waqnenam menipaniw
Mesek Noweqnan kewehnow
Naqsnew kesoq kenatamowim kewaeqsaehkosem
Anah Keskehsekoh waqsahkonawaew

Wahkamiw Pamenan, Nisaehcoq piw mesek mahchi
Pameq niyah, enahkah enes
Kemenen eyom, kakenaha wapehtum,
Mesek kitahpahonen
Kemewenukiw
Pon kekatow kipackiyaenemem, Kespentaeh
Sawaehnemiyah
Sawaehnemiyah
Sawaehnemiyah

“We Are Blessed”

My child, Little White Wolf
Creator smiles on you
My child, Clear Pure Sparkling Water
Pure and clear water
Rain Woman we should never have to wonder
If we are blessed

My child Bear Claw
Creator gave a gift
My child Standing Bear
This beauty grows & grows
Rain Woman we should never have to wonder
If we are blessed

May the stars light your way
And the wind cry your name
May the moon make you shine
And the stars twinkle in your eyes

As clear waters flow and tears come and go
We fly our own ways
Take these seeds and sow; let them nourish your souls
And plant them everywhere you go
Rain Woman we should never have to wonder
If we are blessed
We are blessed
We are blessed
(My child Rain) We are blessed

A note from Wade Fernandez: *“Please note that Menominee Language was not a written language until fairly recently, so spellings are not always consistent. Also, the English is only an interpretation and not an exact translation. It can sometimes be difficult to find words in English for Menominee words and vice versa, especially when writing lyrics that have to fit with rhythm, melody, and time. Menominee Language is very descriptive and sometimes a word in Menominee can be a paragraph in English.”*

Outcomes, Strategies and Assessments

Main Theme: The combination of flowing vocal melody and the use of a native language emphasizes the composer’s gratitude for his culture, his family, his clan, and nature.

Skill Outcome, Strategies and Assessments

Skill outcome: Students will sing in another language using correct pronunciation and vowel/consonant articulation.

Strategies:

1. Students sing repeated lyrics and melody of the lyric ‘Sawaenemiyah’ from Wade Fernandez’ piece, “We Are Blessed” (Video and audio examples are included on the *Re/sound: Songs of Wisconsin* resource page. Search for ‘curriculum’. Pronunciation and help are provided by the performer in his videos.) Help them hear how one word, Sawaenemiyah, is translated into English as three words “We Are Blessed.”
2. Provide students with a familiar song in English. Then provide the translation in another language. Have them sing both with correct pronunciation and vowel/consonant articulation. How do translations sometimes change the flow of the music?
3. Sing “Frere Jacques” in French. Sing “Frere Jacques” in English. Compare and contrast the different vowel sounds. Apply to another song that they might know.
4. Share with your students the composer and performer’s notes he added to the lyrics. To learn more about the efforts of preserving the Menominee language, refer to the *Re/sound: Songs of Wisconsin* resource links page under ‘curriculum’ for more examples.
5. Have students who speak another language give examples of words that are in their language where there is no comparable word in English. Extend this idea by having students interview a world language educator at your school about how they translate. Do they translate word for word or do they paraphrase to provide meaning and context with the speaker’s intent? Have the educator share the challenges they face in doing this for the speaker and the audience. A sign language signer could also be interviewed.

Assessments:

1. Students will create an individual recording of themselves singing an assigned portion of the song “We Are Blessed.” Feedback on their performance will be given via a rubric created by the teacher for accurate pronunciation and vowel/consonant articulation.
2. A small group of students will perform the assigned portion of the song “We Are Blessed” and another small group will listen and fill out a rubric on accurate pronunciation and vowel/consonant articulation. Then the groups can switch places so that both groups have the opportunity to perform and assess.

Knowledge Outcome, Strategies and Assessments

Knowledge Outcome: Students will compare and contrast the First Nations flute to flutes of other cultures.

Strategies:

1. Share with students the performance of Wade Fernandez on his flute in an additional performance. Find it by searching 'instrument' in the Re/sound: Songs of Wisconsin resource links page. Have students describe what they see, the sound they heard, and comparisons or contrasts of other instruments with which they are familiar.
2. Divide the class into small groups. Using online resources, students present to the class a comparison of First Nations flutes and those of another culture. (For web resources of cultural flutes refer to the Re/sound: Songs of Wisconsin resource page. Search for 'instrument'.) Criterion for the presentation could include the following:
3. Construction and materials - How is it shaped? What is it made of? Why did the culture choose those materials? What techniques did they use? Is it decorated? If so, why?
4. Role in culture - Wade speaks of how his flute isn't a part of nature, it is nature-made from natural plants emulating natural sounds. Are there other cultures that view flutes in the same way? In which ceremonies might this flute be played? What is the significance of the instrument in their culture? If so, describe those activities or other genres of music.
5. Techniques of playing - Describe how it is held and how hands are placed. Describe mouthpiece and embouchure.
6. Summary of similarities and differences - Speculate why different cultures have similarities and differences.

Assessment:

1. Create a rubric for content and presentation of the student group's research report. Share the rubric with students before the research project begins so that expectations are clear.

Affective Outcome, Strategies and Assessment

Affective Outcome: Students will explore the theme of gratitude and how it affects their lives.

Strategies:

1. Have students make a list of things for which they are grateful. Have them take this list and turn it into a poem, artwork, video, song or other form of expression. Cooperation with fellow educators in the writing and/or art departments may provide further ideas and direction for creativity.
2. For older students, have them choose a historical or cultural figure, research him or her, share why we can be grateful for their contributions to the past and how these have affected our current life. Again a visual or written form of expression could be prepared.

3. Share the lyrics of other songs and/or performances to have students compare and contrast songs about gratitude. Have students predict what they will hear. Then analyze the elements, style, and/or means of expression each performer chose. Ask why such a variety exists. Help students see that all forms of gratitude are expressed differently, but are still ways for people to express their thanks. Examples could include Andrew Gold's "Thank You for Being a Friend," ABBA's "Thank You for the Music," John Denver's "Thank God I'm a Country Boy," Sherryl Sewepaaham's "Children's Blessing Song," along with many others.
4. Share how people of First Nations are connected to the land and everything in it. (Examples might include their name, their ancestors, their stories, ways of forestry and farming, and the like.) Have students share with the class or in a small group when they have shown a connection or respect to the environment around them. Then have them share times when they haven't or they've seen other people disrespect the environment.
5. Students will write a letter to an elder about their blessings and how their elders have affected their lives.
6. For older students, have them interview and record an interview of someone they respect. Questions could include the person's life, history, interests, favorite memory. The interviewer could include things for which they are thankful of that person.

Assessment:

1. The student will write a self-assessment about their chosen project. The document should be in the form of telling a story about their journey with discovering what they are grateful for. (Telling stories is part of the Menominee culture from which this song comes.) The following ideas might be included in the directions.
 - a. What drew you to the project that you chose?
 - b. What did you learn about yourself?
 - c. What did you learn about your own culture and heritage?
 - d. Did thinking about being grateful change anything in your thinking?
 - e. What process did you use in finding information?
 - f. If you chose to create a piece of visual art or video, why did you choose the materials that you chose?
 - g. If you chose to create a song, poem why did you choose the words or musical elements that you chose?
 - h. If you chose to interview an elder or historical person, what were your reasons for choosing them?

Extensions

1. Share and discuss these questions with your students after watching the interview video:
 - Wade shares some examples of the connections he sees between music and nature. How do you think music and nature are connected? What emotions come up for you as you listen to Wade's nature-inspired music?

- Wade talks about an experience when a music teacher said that “...after two and a half years with you, you still sound like Wade Fernandez.” Who do you think the teacher wanted him to sound like? Why? Have you ever been told to be more like someone else? What did you do or feel about that?
 - Wade shares that his cultural identity is hard to define and that he considers himself to be "part of life"—part of something broader than one culture or another. What does “cultural identity” mean to you? How would you describe your own identity?
2. Have students research the First Nations languages spoken throughout Wisconsin’s history. This may include a specific city, region, or the entire state. Resources abound in cultural centers and on language trees provided on the internet. Further research could include the number of first languages spoken in households in the past and present.
 3. Besides flutes, share other cultural instruments found in the First Nations of your area. Comparisons and contrasts of these instruments could be done throughout the state. Connect how instruments are made of the resources found in and around a culture as well as the lore that is created with them. For a map of First Nations across the state of Wisconsin, see the Re/sound: Songs of Wisconsin resource page. Search for ‘culture’.
 4. Beyond the role of flutes in a culture, help students understand the role music plays in any given culture. The list could include: heritage preservation, historical events, cultural identity, storytelling, community awareness, unification of ideas, personal life events, ritual or religious rites, and the like. Students could gather an example for each of those listed or include music in a list of their own.
 5. Go on a nature hike, as a group or encourage students to do so individually or with their families. (If unavailable show various images and sounds of animals and plants.) While there, make a journal entry about what you see, feel and experience and how you are grateful for it.
 6. Have students research street names, monuments, school names, city parks, or other landmarks of your area and share why these people have been honored, valued, and raised up above others of that time.
 7. Have the students write a journal entry describing their favorite and why that song connects to their own sense of gratitude. Have students find additional songs that express the same theme and prepare a report that includes comparisons to the assigned songs and why they chose the new songs from their playlist.
 8. Wade describes how important culture is to him and how his whole life is a reflection of that. Help students think about and describe their personal identity including who they are, the effects of their culture and surroundings, and then embracing this identity. As students share who they are, help them see the importance of other people and how they can encourage others to find and express their identity.
 9. Wade talks in his interview about the mix of musical experiences from which he draws to create his own sound. (His list included jazz, blues, and folk music.) Have students research characteristics of these styles and find a portion of one of Wade’s songs or performances that demonstrate these characteristics.

Standards Addressed

WMEA Music Standards

MU:Cr3.1.5a, MU:Pr4.2.6c, MU:Pr5.1.6a, MU:Pr6.1.8a, MU:Re7.2.7b, MU:Re8.1.8a, MU:Cn10.1.4b, MU:Cn11.1.7b

DPI Standards

MG.2.P.8.i, MG.2.P.10.i, MG.2.P.12.m, MG.2.P.14.m, MG.2.P.15.m, MG.3.R.7.i, MG.4.Cn.7.i, MG.4.Cn.8.i, MG.4.Cn.10.m, MG.4.Cn.11.m, MG.4.Cn.12.m

Resources

1. Resources to help reach the outcomes and strategies are provided at:
<https://wsmamusic.org/re-sound/resources/>. For Menominee cultural background and history search 'culture.' For PBS music and art resources, search 'culture, instrument, curriculum, or performer.' For Native American cultural centers in Wisconsin and the United States search 'culture'. For Native American flute resources search 'instrument' and for additional Wade Fernandez websites and links search 'performer.'
2. [Interview transcript](#)
3. Musician photos (see next page)



Wade Fernandez playing his flute near his home in Keshena, WI on February 7, 2020.
Photo credit: PBS Wisconsin Education.



Wade Fernandez performing in Mills Hall on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus on February 10, 2020.
Photo credit: PBS Wisconsin Education.

Re/sound: Songs of Wisconsin is a collaboration between PBS Wisconsin Education and Wisconsin School Music Association.

