

The History of American Music

This activity accompanies “The Ol’ Tunes,” from *The Complete Poems of Paul Laurence Dunbar* by Paul Laurence Dunbar, record number 5026.

Activity Title: The History of American Music

Description: The students will compare and contrast two eras of music, one of the eras being the Civil War/Reconstruction era.

Subject: Reading/Language Arts and Music

Skill: Literary Analysis, and cultural and historical connections

Behavioral Objective:

- The student will understand the development of American music by comparing and contrasting two eras of music.

Materials:

- “The Ol’ Tunes” poem, available in audio and print form at <http://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/>
- Paper and pencils
- Access to the internet to American Popular Music Before 1900: <http://kclibrary.lonestar.edu/music-1.html>
- Venn diagram template (below)

Procedures:

Read the poem with the students, or have them read it on their own. Discuss with the students the main idea of the poem. Next, have the students work with a partner to research and compare and contrast two music eras, using the website above. Have the students compare the Civil War/Reconstruction era with one other era of American music, using the Venn diagram (below). Then, have the partners share what they learned with another group who researched a different era.



NAME _____

DATE _____

Comparing American Music Eras

Civil War/Reconstruction Era _____

