

LEARNING LINKS

**JazzReach:
Stolen
Moments -
The First 100
Years of Jazz**

THURSDAY
OCTOBER 22 2015
11 AM

2015 > 2016

BROADEN THE HORIZONS
OF YOUR CLASSROOM.
EXPERIENCE THE VIBRANT
WORLD OF THE ARTS
AT THE McCALLUM!



McCallum Theatre Institute
Field Trip Series



McCALLUM THEATRE INSTITUTE
PRESENTS

JazzReach: Stolen Moments - The First 100 Years of Jazz

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“Jazz is an
American art form.”

H. Benjamin Schuman

Connecting to Curriculum and Students' Lives!

HISTORY • Twentieth Century America, African-Americans

GEOGRAPHY • Urban America

ARTS • Music, specifically jazz

THEMES • Collaboration, improvisation

Expanding the Concept of Literacy

What is a “text”? We invite you to consider the performances on McCallum’s Field Trip Series as non-print texts available for study and investigation by your students. Anyone who has shown a filmed version of a play in their classroom, used a website as companion to a textbook, or asked students to do online research already knows that “texts” don’t begin and end with textbooks, novels, and reading packets. They extend to videos, websites, games, plays, concerts, dances, radio programs, and a number of other non-print texts that students and teachers engage with on a regular basis.

We know that when we expand our definition of texts to the variety of media that we use in our everyday lives, we broaden the materials and concepts we have at our disposal in the classroom, increase student engagement, and enrich learning experiences.

Please consider how utilizing your McCallum performance as a text might align to standards established for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language.

How do we help students to use these texts as a way of shaping ideas and understanding the world?

Please use this material to help you on this journey.

NON-PRINT TEXT • any medium/text that creates meaning through sound or images or both, such as symbols, words, songs, speeches, pictures, and illustrations not in traditional print form including those seen on computers, films, and in the environment.

The Work of Art

A Non-print Text for Study

- What's it made of? How can this work serve as a *Common Core State Standards*-mandated "text" for student study in the classroom?



Ask JazzReach to describe their historical review of jazz, and they'll respond:

"*Stolen Moments* is a thoroughly captivating and informative program that introduces audiences to jazz music's rich history and to the names, faces and music of some of its many masters. On a broader level, *Stolen Moments* also highlights the interplay between the jazz movement and the evolution of American culture throughout the Twentieth Century. It emphasizes the ways in which jazz has acted as a unifying force — bridging cultural, ethnic and economic differences; stimulated cultural fusions and new stylistic idioms; exemplified democratic ideals; and influenced other genres of music, both in the U.S. and abroad."

The house lights dim, the crowd grows hushed. The stage lights come up. The musicians are in place, instruments gleaming. The charismatic speaker at the music stand launches into his informative narration.

"Jazz is an American art form and very much reflects the democratic principles on which this country was founded," declares H. Benjamin Schuman. "It is a product of the Twentieth Century, and clearly reflects the meteoric rate at which we've evolved — and continue to evolve as a civilization."

And then because this is no dry recitation of facts meant to be received passively by the listener, our guide for the evening calls on the audience to supply its share of the story:

"Cars were bigger," he cries in the tones of a revivalist preacher. "Cities were bigger. And the workforce was — what?"

Audience: (charging into life) Bigger!

"So jazz bands were — WHAT?"

Audience: (shrieks of joy) BIGGER!

Mr. Schuman beams with approval. "In fact, the period between 1935 and 1945 is referred to as the Big Band era."

We lean forward in rapt anticipation.

He continues: "America's urban centers were booming with theaters, nightclubs, cabarets, speakeasies and dance halls which of course all called for live music." At which point, the players who have been fidgeting restlessly with their reeds and valves like racehorses stamping the straw in their stalls, spring into motion. The saxophones let out an oscillating wail. A murmur of pleasure ripples through the hall. Then players launch into a big band tune, replete with that toe tapping syncopation one associates with ditties like *In the Mood* and *Chattanooga Choo Choo*. On the screen above, images culled from the rich photographic history of jazz leap out at us. *Stolen Moments* – which will over the next hour draw parallels between developing trends in jazz and the reshaping of America by the Twentieth Century – is off and running!

"The rate at which jazz evolved was just as astounding as the rate at which American culture evolved."

JazzReach



The Artists

Who has *produced* this text for study?



Suppose you loved something so much you were willing, even driven, to devote your life to sharing it with others. Maybe you already do this. You have some insight then into how H. Benjamin Schuman feels. Some time ago, this enterprising drummer sold the piano his grandmother, dying, left him, and with the proceeds got a logo, an address, and a business name. He was bent on building an organization that could bring jazz to youngsters. A bold act, if you ask us. Well, this visionary labored in the wilderness, so to speak, for five years, with just his logo and an unyielding zeal for writing letters and applying for grants. At last, something happened. The ASCAP Foundation came through with a \$5,000 grant. JazzReach was born! Right away it swung into action with its first presentation, *Get Hip!*. Perhaps you even recall that show from a few seasons ago? Here's the recipe: add multimedia elements to one jazz quintet, stir in Schuman's pithy instruction, and voila! You have a kid-friendly entry into that most American of music genres: jazz.

Schuman himself, a native of Lansing, Michigan, first began to thump a drumhead when he was all of 13. In those heady days a high school education included thorough musical training, and he availed himself of the opportunity. After a stint at Berklee College of Music, he entered into a career as a working musician. The rest of his story you know.

Contexts

What *information* surrounds this text for study & could help make students' engagement with it more powerful?

“Our mission is to make jazz accessible.”

JazzReach

Jazz! What is it? Where did it come from? When?

The first question might be hardest of all to answer – and that's because almost everyone who thinks he or she knows something about jazz, will come up with a somewhat different definition. Jazz is that big and that encompassing. Webster's says jazz is characterized by propulsive syncopated rhythms, polyphonic ensemble playing, varying degrees of improvisation, and often deliberate distortions of pitch and timbre. This definition is fine if you're a trained musician and know what all those "five dollar words" mean. Contemporary great, Wynton Marsalis says jazz is music that swings. If that makes sense to us, let's go with it!

Origins will be interesting to trace down. Let's take a trip through history starting, alas, with a not very happy or proud chapter. We refer to the climax of the Atlantic slave trade which, by the first decade of the 1800s, had relocated half a million Sub-Saharan Africans to the U.S. They brought a wealth of musical traditions with them. The rhythms, which echoed speech patterns, meant that some parts were on the beat and some parts were off the beat. It was striking that African music was melody only – no harmony. This latter component was encountered in church hymns, and they soon put it to use in pieces of their own, which were called spirituals. They also learned to play European instruments. Following the Civil War, drums and fifes also became available. This combination made a big hit in the African American community and featured a liberal dose of syncopation. Of course, with the freeing of the slaves, a huge workforce materialized. Quite a wide range of jobs were off limits however. So, many African-Americans turned to entertainment as a livelihood. Pianists played clubs and saloons. Vaudeville was developing, and many of the newly freed Americans found work in theaters as minstrels. Marching bands were another option. By the end of the century Scott Joplin had published his *Maple Leaf Rag* and the phenomenon of ragtime went international. Talk about off beat and harmonies that jolted! Even some of the more experimental "longhairs" from the classical world got on the bandwagon; Impressionistic French composer Claude Debussy and Russian enfant terrible Igor Stravinsky put out rag style music of their own.

Well, while ragtime was catching fire in citadels like Chicago and New York, the blues were birthing in the Deep South. Based to some extent on work songs, spirituals and chants, these new pieces wailed with pentatonic-inspired blue notes and heart-on-sleeve emotionalism. Blue notes are notes sung or played flat – and they came out of the chord progressions specific to the genre. Coronet player W. C. Handy, hearing an early song of this sort, refashioned what he could recall of it, adding his own genius of course, into St. Louis Blues. The blues would have a lasting impact on Western harmony and allow for staggering complexity in jazz.

New Orleans played quite a role in these emergent musical forms, particularly jazz itself. In some of the less, ahem, polite parts of town, amazing things were happening musically. Afro-Creoles like Jelly Roll Morton were infusing the home-grown music with exotic things like the habanera, really shaking it up rhythm-wise. Morton was one of those musicians who was building a bridge between blues and jazz. He could play both, and he sure did swing! Swing is something this pianist-composer lifted up to a place of prominence. Swing is a crucial ingredient of jazz. Swing is...well, once again folks are challenged when it comes to agreeing on a definition. Louis Armstrong said about swing, "If you don't feel it, you'll never know it," and maybe we should leave it at that.

In the 1920s, Prohibition settled in. Drinking was outlawed, and speakeasies came to be. This era is known as the Jazz Age, and as you can imagine jazz was the music du jour! Actually, it was a pretty jazzy time in many ways, and not everyone – particularly the stodgy guardians of moral rectitude – was enthusiastic about the new music. By 1924, Louis Armstrong was already blazing those trails we mentioned a little earlier.

To get ready for the performance, students could research these:

- Jazz – collaboration, improvisation, syncopation and musical elements
- Jazz giants such as Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Miles Davis, and Thelonious Monk



Here's a 60 minute lesson in collaboration & problem-solving you could teach to help prepare students for this work:

Line of Inquiry* How does JazzReach use a blend of narration and demonstration to explore the intermingled histories of jazz and America?

ASK: What's jazz?

Share with them a short list:

- African-American origin
- is partly planned and partly improvised (made up at the moment)
- is syncopated (off the beat)
- began in the South
- can change the mood of a song (an up-tempo or fast song can become a ballad or slower song, for example)

SHARE CONTEXT: In the show we're going to see, JazzReach uses a blend of narration and demonstration to explore the intermingled histories of jazz and America. Some of the historical greats we shall be introduced to include Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Miles Davis and Thelonious Monk.

TAKE-HOME PROJECT: Each table group gets the name of one of these artists. At home, each student researches that artist, discovering what they find most interesting biographically and musically – and makes a written list of these findings.

ART MAKING (LANGUAGE ARTS): The following day, each member of a table group shares with their group members the information they've collected. With the classroom teacher's guidance, each table group then collaboratively creates a one page narration in which some information about the artist is engagingly presented.

These are shared aloud.

FINAL REFLECTIVE QUESTION: What are some of the things we're learning about jazz?

**A Line of Inquiry is an Essential Question that generates a lesson*

After coming to the theater, students could research these:

- Collaboration
- Improvisation
- Syncopation



Here's a 45-60 minute lesson you could teach after students have experienced the work:

Facilitate a discussion of the performance. Begin by having students describe everything they saw and heard.

ASK: How were musical examples, information, and images integrated? How did the musicians collaborate? How could you tell they were improvising? How did the performers interact with the audience? What new information about the artist(s), you had researched, did you learn? Why were they so important? Any surprises in the show? Why do you think JazzReach created this show in this way?

GROUP BRAINSTORM: JazzReach layered musical selections into the narration. What pieces (excerpts) could we layer into our narration? How would we do it?

ART MAKING: Each table group finds examples of music played by — or somehow associated with — their artist, and decodes how they will layer this into their narration.

These are presented to the class.

To deepen student understanding, ask open-ended questions about the effect of the musical selections layered into narration.

“We always try to contextualize the music somehow to make it relevant to our audiences.”

JazzReach

What's *your* read of this non-print text?

How would you answer these questions – and how could they be adapted as Guiding Questions to spark student discussion?

- What pieces were played and in what order? What sequencing ideas seemed in operation? What about transitions between numbers?
- Who played which instrument?
- How did musicians communicate with each other?
- Was there a sense of leadership? Who provided this and how?
- Could you hear evidence of improvisation? What were the clues? How would you characterize those parts of the playing when improvisation did not seem to be happening?
- How were the ideas of interaction and collaboration used here?
- How did JazzReach get the audience actively involved? What purposes might lay behind those strategies?
- What educational methods were used in the performance?
- How was multimedia used?
- What information really struck you about the history?
- What made these legendary musicians giants?
- How was showmanship used?
- How were the musicians set up in the stage space and why do you think they were set up that way?
- What effect did the audience have on the performers?
- What are some adjectives that describe their playing?
- What value does this format of program have?
- What made the strongest impression on you? What left you wanting to know more?

Internet

Super jazz site

www.pbs.org/jazz/

This PBS site offers fun, informative info in connection with Ken Burn's acclaimed documentary. A special section called JazzKids is designed just for students.

Big band era jazz for kids

www.bobethomas.com/history/history_big_band_kids.htm

Official Ellington website

www.dukeellington.com/

Internet

Dizzy Gillespie

www.pbs.org/jazz/biography/artist_id_gillespie_dizzy.htm

Biography and audio samples.

Miles Davis

<http://kidsmusiccorner.co.uk/composers/jazz/miles-davis/>

Charlie "Bird" Parker

www.birdlives.co.uk/

An absolutely awesome, massive and nicely laid out site dedicated to all things "Bird." Please note: Charlie Parker struggled with, and ultimately succumbed to, addiction. This subject, as it comes up, will need sensitive guidance from an adult.

Louis Armstrong: "Satchmo"

www.redhotjazz.com/louie.html

A biography, history of Jazz before 1930 and over 1,000 songs from this era in Real Audio 3 format.

Thelonius Monk

<http://kidsmusiccorner.co.uk/composers/jazz/thelonious-monk/>

Books

Jazz

By: Walter Dean Myers

Reading level: Ages 4–8

Publisher: Holiday House (2008)

ISBN-10: 0823421732

Who Was Louis Armstrong?

By: Yona Zeldis McDonough

Reading level: Ages 8 and up

Publisher: Grosset & Dunlap (December 2004)

ISBN-10: 0448433680

If not for a stint in reform school, young Louis Armstrong might never have become a musician. It was a teacher at the Colored Waifs Home who gave him a cornet, promoted him to band leader, and saw talent in the tough kid from the even tougher New Orleans neighborhood of Storyville. But it was Louis Armstrong's own passion and genius that pushed jazz into new and exciting realms with his amazing, improvisational trumpet playing. His seventy-year life spanned a critical time in American music as well as African American history.

Books

If I Only Had a Horn: Young Louis Armstrong

By: Roxane Orgill

Reading level: Ages 4-8

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers (August 2002)

ISBN-10: 061825076X

Orgill tells the story of a boy overcoming incredible odds to achieve his dream, without becoming too dark, maudlin or even overly hopeful.

Dizzy

By: Jonah Winter

Reading level: Ages 4-8

Publisher: Arthur A. Levine Books (October 2006)

ISBN-10: 0439507375

This is the story of Dizzy Gillespie, a real cool cat who must have been born with a horn in his hands. He was a clown. He hit high notes, low notes, never-been-heard notes, and before he knew it, Dizzy created a whole new music: BEBOP.

Duke Ellington: His Life in Jazz with 21 Activities

By: Stephanie Stein Crease

Reading level: Ages 9 and up

Publisher: Chicago Review Press; 1 edition (2009)

ISBN-10: 1556527241

Comprehensive biography with engaging activities.

Charlie Parker Played Bebop

By: Christopher Raschka

Reading level: Ages 4 - 8

Publisher: Scholastic; Reprint edition (September 1, 1997)

ISBN-10: 0531070956

This sparse, rhythmic, repetitive text (inspired by a recording of Parker's "A Night in Tunisia") embraces and reflects the sound and feel of jazz when read aloud: "Charlie Parker played bebop. / Charlie Parker played saxophone. / The music sounded like bebop. / Never leave your cat alone."

Charlie Parker (American Jazz)

By: Earle Rice

Reading level: Grade 6 - 9

Publisher: Mitchell Lane Publishers (June 2012)

ISBN-10: 1612282660

Written in sophisticated language, with the more difficult vocabulary and musical terms defined, this text offers information about the subject's childhood and preparation for his musical career as well as the positive and negative aspects of his adult life.

Books

Miles Davis (Black Americans of Achievement)

By: Ron Frankel

Reading level: Ages 11 and up

Publisher: Chelsea House Publications (May 1995)

ISBN-10: 0791021564

Chronicles the life and achievements of twentieth-century jazz performer Miles Davis, revealing his contributions to the industry and natural musical and leadership talents that inspired many young jazz musicians.

Mysterious Thelonious

By: Chris Raschka

Reading level: Ages 6 and up

Publisher: Orchard Books; First Edition edition (September 1997)

ISBN-10: 0531300579

There have been many tributes to the great jazz composer and performer Thelonius Monk, but none so arresting and surround-sound-appealing as this small, unassuming book. Here, you'll find pure, punchy music. Scant words jump and dance over pages that bear greater resemblance to musical staves than still places for text to sit idly. Beautiful watercolors splash and adorn the pages' multi-boxed backgrounds in a smooth, harmonic pattern based on the tones of the chromatic scale. A groovy piano makes the occasional appearance, along with the slouchy, jivin', slumpy, jammin' image of Monk doing what he did best. Do not read this book — instead, sing it, swing it, and sway to its infectious music.

CDS

Essential Louis Armstrong

Label: Sony (August 2004)

ASIN: B0002JE8WU

This 2-CD set impressively boils down one of the most brilliant and lengthy careers in music: 37 tracks from six record labels and 42 years. Satchmo performs *Sugar Foot Stomp*; *Heebie Jeebies*; *Potato Head Blues*; *Basin Street Blues*; *Tight Like This*; *Ain't Misbehavin'*; *Lazy River*; *Stardust*; *Blueberry Hill*; *Mack the Knife*; *What a Wonderful World* and more!

Bird and Diz

Artists: Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonius Monk

Label: Verve (July 1997)

ASIN: B0002JE8WU

This date from June 6, 1950, was an unusual one for Charlie Parker. He chose to play with fellow bop creators Dizzy Gillespie and Thelonius Monk, in a striking reunion with the trumpeter and the only occasion on which Parker recorded with the pianist.

CDS

Town Hall, New York City, June 22, 1945

Artists: Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker

Label: Uptown Jazz (June 2005)

ASIN: B0009Q0EQ0

This is a live concert recording of Dizzy and Bird from Town Hall not previously known to have been recorded. With audio restoration by Ted Kendell, the sound is excellent. It is a discovered recording of Dizzy and Bird at bebop's inception.

Kind of Blue

Artist: Miles Davis

Label: Sony (March 1997)

ASIN: B000002ADT

This is the one jazz record owned by people who don't listen to jazz, and with good reason. The band itself is extraordinary — proof of Miles Davis's masterful casting skills. John Coltrane and Julian "Cannonball" Adderley on saxophones, Bill Evans on piano, Paul Chambers on bass and Jimmy Cobb on drums.

Essential Duke Ellington

Original Release Date: 2005

Number of Discs: 2

Format: Original recording remastered

Label: Sony

ASIN: B0009RQSC8

A good introductory compilation of some of the Duke's vast output.

Brilliant Corners

Artist: Thelonious Monk

Label: Riverside (March 2008)

ASIN: B0012S59ZU

Such an iconic album, no surprise it was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame and was added to the U.S. National Recording Registry.

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**“Jazz music’s place in
America’s cultural history...
we try to break it down.”**

JazzReach