



FEATURE

WOMEN IN ROCK

Meets National Core Arts Standards 1, 2, 7-9, and 11

OBJECTIVES

- Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work (*Cr1*)
- Organize and develop artistic ideas and work (*Cr2*)
- Perceive and analyze artistic work (*Re7*)
- Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work (*Re8*)
- Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work (*Re9*)
- Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding (*Cn11*)

MATERIALS

- *Music Alive!* magazines (March 2017)
- *Music Alive!* Classroom Worksheet #12: Staff Paper (download at musicalive.com)
- Computer or mobile device with Internet access

START

1. **Invite the students to read** “Women in Rock” on pages 6-9 to learn about the role of women in the history and development of rock music. Then, review and discuss the following terms. [This reinforces comprehension and vocabulary.]

RENDITION—a version of something

NEXUS—the central and/or most important part or place through which other, similar things connect

PERMUTATIONS—varied ways in which a given set of things may be ordered or presented

VANGUARD—a person or group at the forefront of a new movement

SPECTRUM—a wide range

DEVELOP

1. **Play** “Rock Me” by Sister Rosetta Tharpe (Hear the Music playlist **track 2** on musicalive.com).

ASK

- **“Rock Me” is a reimagining of a gospel hymn called “Hide Me in Thy Bosom.” Does this sound like a traditional gospel hymn to you?** (No.)
- **What style of music is this?** (Swing, or perhaps even early rock ‘n’ roll.)
- **What first makes it seem like this isn’t a gospel hymn for use in church?** (Tharpe’s opening guitar solo.)
- **Why do you think someone would take a religious song and reinterpret it like this?** (Subjective. Perhaps to make the song accessible to a wider audience, but also perhaps to satirize it. Many contemporaries assumed that Sister Rosetta was doing the latter, which was not true.)

2. **Play** “Somebody to Love” by Jefferson Airplane (Hear the Music playlist **track 3** on musicalive.com).

ASK

- **What is the mood of the song?** (Somewhat bleak and depressing.)
- **What elements give it that tone or feel?** (The lyrics in the verses describe sad and unpleasant situations, the song is in a minor key, etc.)
- **What phrase is most often repeated in this song?** (“Somebody to love”—which is, not surprisingly, the title!)
- **Does the “feel” of the song change at all during these repeated lyrics?** (Subjective. The extra voice creates a new texture, and the feel is slightly more optimistic—as though finding “somebody to love” will fix all of the problems mentioned in the verse.)
- **Why do you think that the phrase “somebody to love” is repeated so many times?** (Subjective. Perhaps as an antidote to the lyrics of the verses, to hammer home the importance of finding “somebody to love,” etc.)

3. **Play** “We Got the Beat” by the Go-Go’s (Hear the Music playlist **track 4** on musicalive.com).

ASK

- **What is the first instrument you hear in this song?** (The drum kit.)
- **What is the time signature of this song?** (4/4.)
- **How would you describe the drum part of this song?** (Persistent, driving, prominent, etc.)
- **Does the drum part ever pause?** (No.)
- **Why do you think this is?** (To keep the song “moving,” but also to emphasize its lyrics and theme.)

CLOSE

1. **Have the students come up with ideas** on how to turn a piece of music “on its head,” but with a sense of respect for the original piece, similar to what Sister Rosetta Tharpe did with “Rock Me.” For instance, how could they rework the “Ode to Joy” from the fourth movement of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 into a different style, but without disrespecting the original meaning and intention of the piece?

ASSESS

- **Did the students read the article?**
- **Did the students understand the concept of changing the feel of a piece of music in a non-satirical way?**
- **Did the students understand the concept of repeated lyrics, and why songwriters might employ this device?**
- **Did the students understand the role of the driving drum beat in the song “We Got the Beat”?**
- **Did the students reimagine the theme from Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9?**