



THE ROAD TO BROADWAY

Meets National Core Arts Anchor Standards 1-3, 5, 7, 9, and 10

OBJECTIVES

- Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work (*Cr1*)
- Organize and develop artistic ideas and work (*Cr2*)
- Refine and complete artistic ideas and work (*Cr3*)
- Develop and refine artistic work for presentation (*Pr5*)
- Perceive and analyze artistic work (*Re7*)
- Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work (*Re9*)
- Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art (*Cn10*)

MATERIALS

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

START

Ask your students to read “The Road to Broadway” on pages 6-9. Then, go over the following highlighted words. [This reinforces comprehension and vocabulary.]

PROJECT—speak/sing to be heard in a theater

CHOREOGRAPHY—planned dance movements

BLOCKING—the exact location of actors on a stage

ENGAGE—to participate in

EMPOWERED—to become stronger and more confident

DEVELOP

► **1. Play** “Time to Play” from *School of Rock* (Hear the Music **track 2** on musicalive.com).

ASK

- **What’s the time signature?** (4/4.)
- **Does the song begin in a major or minor key signature?** (Major—C major.)
- **What’s the style of music?** (Rock.)
- **What are some of the instruments you hear?** (Acoustic and electric guitars, drums, and bass.)
- **Are the singers kids or adults?** (Kids.)
- **What happens at around 2:31?** (The music modulates up a half step, to the key of C#/D \flat major.)
- **What effect does this have on the music?** (It helps to build excitement.)
- **When background singers join the lead vocalist at around 2:54, are they singing in harmony or in unison?** (In unison.)

► **2. Play** “I Like It” from *A Bronx Tale* (Hear the Music **track 3** on musicalive.com).

ASK

- **What’s the time signature?** (4/4.)
- **Can anyone describe the rhythmic feel?** (The song has a shuffle feel—each pair of consecutive eighth notes is played not evenly but in a triplet pattern where the first note is worth two note values and the second just one.)
- **What instruments can you hear?** (Electric guitar, horns, drums, and bass.)
- **Is the key signature minor or major?** (Major—E \flat major.)
- **Why do you think the key of E \flat major was chosen for this song?** (It’s a key that’s easy for horns to play in due to their natural flatted key signature tunings.)
- **Can anyone say what style of music the piece is influenced by?** (1950s or ’60s doo-wop.)
- **Why do you think this style of music was used?** (It goes with the period in which the musical takes place.)
- **Is the lead singer a kid or an adult?** (A kid.)

► **3. Play** “To Play This Part” from *Ruthless* (Hear the Music **track 4** on musicalive.com).

ASK

- **What’s going on rhythmically at the very beginning?** (The song is played very freely, and is not restrained to a strict beat.)
- **Is it in a major or minor key?** (Major—B major.)
- **What happens to the music at around 0:39?** (It modulates up a half step, to the key of C major.)
- **What instruments do you hear?** (Just piano until the very end, where there’s a hint of cymbal.)
- **How many singers are there?** (One.)
- **Do the piano chords sound simple or complex?** (Complex.)
- **Which of the songs sounds the most like traditional musical theater?** (This one.)
- **Which song do you like best, and why?** (Subjective.)

CLOSE

Hand out copies of the staff paper worksheet (or have the students use notation software) and have the students write short songs for imaginary musicals. The songs should include melodies, lyrics, and chords. Students can use inspiration from any outside source materials in composing these pieces, such as a favorite TV show or poem. Have the students share their pieces by singing and playing them on classroom keyboards or other instruments.

ASSESS

- **Did the students read the article?**
- **Did they discuss the listening selections?**
- **Did they compose and perform their show tunes?**