



FINGERPICKING GOOD

Meets National Core Arts Standards 7-9, 11

OBJECTIVES

- 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 (January 2018)
- Computer or mobile device with Internet access

START

Ask your students to read “Fingerpicking Good” on pages 10-13. Then, go over the following highlighted words. **[This reinforces comprehension and vocabulary.]**

FINGERSTYLE—a broad description of guitar techniques using individual fingers to pluck, strum, and otherwise strike the strings.
FLAMENCO—a Spanish musical form known for fingerstyle guitar
FRAILING—a guitar technique in which the singers brush across the strings
INNOVATIVE—featuring new methods; advanced and original
ADAPT—make (something) suitable for a new use or purpose; modify

DEVELOP

- **1. Play** Andrés Segovia’s Bach Prelude BWV 1007 (Hear the Music **track 5** on musicalive.com).

ASK

What genre of music is it? (Classical)

How is he attacking the guitar strings? (He’s plucking with his fingers.)

How does he use his fingers? (His thumb plays the lower notes while his first two fingers play the higher notes.)

Are you hearing more chords or individual notes? (Chords.)

Was the music written for guitar? (No: It’s a cello piece that Segovia adapted.)

What is the song’s tempo? (It’s played at a medium tempo.)

Is the song in a major or minor key? (Major)

Do you like it? Why or why not? (Subjective.)

- **2. Play** Paco de Lucía’s “Entre dos Aguas” (Hear the Music **track 6** on musicalive.com).

ASK

What is this song’s style? (Flamenco.)

Is the song in a major or minor key? (Minor.)

What instruments do you hear? (Guitars, bass, percussion.)

In what order do the instruments come in? (Bass, percussion, rhythm guitar, lead/melody guitar.)

Describe the tone of the guitar. (It goes from mellow to bright to percussive.)

What happens during the first few measures of the first guitar solo? (The rest of the band rests for a few measures.)

What happens in the middle of the song (at about 2:35)? (There’s a solo guitar break with fast strumming, then the band comes back in.)

Around four minutes into the song, the guitar melody changes. How? (It moves to a lower octave.)

After the break, there’s a guitar solo. Describe some of its qualities. (The guitar goes from playing the melody to playing very fast.)

What do you like or not like about it? (Subjective.)

- **3. Play** Keb’ Mo’s “Am I Wrong?” (Hear the Music **track 7** on musicalive.com).

ASK

What genre is the song? (Acoustic blues.)

Can you name one of the early blues guitarists from the story who influenced Keb Mo’? (Blind Blake, Sylvester Weaver.)

What instruments do you hear? (Guitar, voice, and foot percussion)

How would you describe the guitar sound? (Percussive and rhythmic.)

How do the guitar and vocal work together? (The guitar sometimes follows the vocal melody. At other times, it provides a harmony.)

What is the time signature? (4/4.)

How is Keb’ Mo’ changing notes on the guitar? (He’s using a slide, instead of fretting the strings with his fingers.)

Why do you think Keb’ Mo’ decided to use his fingers instead of a pick? (Using his fingers gives him more control over which notes are sounded.)

What did you like or not like about this song? (Subjective.)

CLOSE

Discuss some of the ways that the three examples compare and contrast. For example, both Segovia and Keb’ Mo’ use thumb a finger technique to move between low and high strings. Paco de Lucía and Keb’ Mo’ both play rhythmically. Segovia and de Lucía both play in minor keys and play distinct melodies with their fingers. If there’s additional time, have them write a short paragraph on which one is their personal favorite.

ASSESS

Did the students read the article?

Did they discuss the three listening selections?

Were they able to compare and contrast the three examples?