

THE NEIGHBORHOOD STORY PROJECT  
& THE NEW ORLEANS JAZZ NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK PRESENT:



*Talk That*

MUSIC TALK

**FOR THE CLASSROOM**

TEACHER'S GUIDE TO MUSIC, CULTURE, & SOCIAL JUSTICE IN NEW ORLEANS



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*Talk That Music Talk For the Classroom: A Teacher's Guide to Music, Culture,  
and Social Justice in New Orleans* by Bruce Sunpie Barnes,  
Rachel Breunlin, and Richard Johnson

Special thanks to New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park interpretive park rangers  
Bud Holmes and Matt Hampsey for their support.

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The Neighborhood Story Project  
and the New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park

This curriculum is based on the collaborative ethnography  
*Talk That Music Talk: Passing On Brass Band Music in New Orleans the Traditional Way*,  
by Bruce Sunpie Barnes and Rachel Breunlin, published by UNO Press in 2014.

It is supported by the New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park,  
the Neighborhood Story Project, the University of New Orleans Press,  
and the Thriving Cultures Program at the Surdna Foundation.

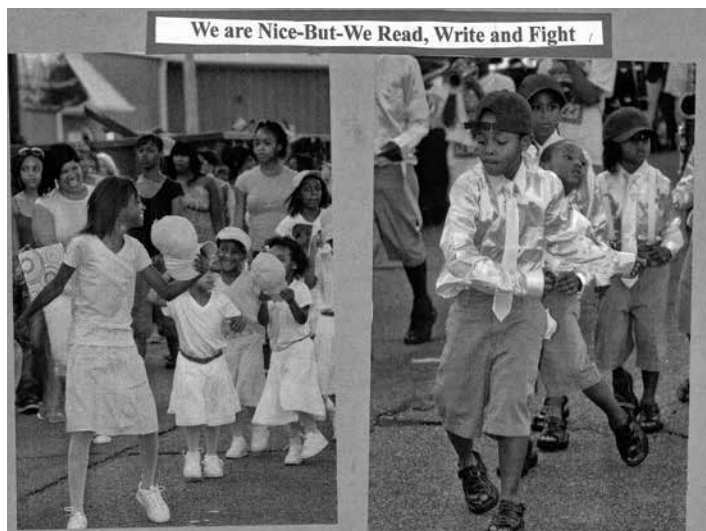


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# INTRODUCTION





Curriculum from Tambourine and Fan connects New Orleans cultural connections to civil rights and organizing work. Photograph courtesy of Tambourine and Fan.

*For many people in New Orleans, and then all over the world, [jazz] is synonymous for life-giving. As a teacher, someone who wants to pass it on to the next generation, you have to find ways to hold the spirit of where it came into existence. —Jerome Smith, co-founder of the New Orleans' Chapter of Congress of Racial Equality (C.O.R.E.) and Tambourine and Fan from Talk That Music Talk: Passing On Brass Band Music in New Orleans the Traditional Way.*

As young people come of age, they often experience tensions between the traditions they are inheriting and their own desires to create new ways of being. The struggles around the old and the new occur in every generation. They manifest themselves in all art forms as well as social justice struggles. As teachers, our job is to help our students recognize what is happening and help them develop their own voices. We can ask them, “How will you reflect the cultures that shaped you, and how will you change them?”

*Talk That Music Talk: A Teacher's Guide to Music, Culture, and Social Justice in New Orleans* is designed to engage high school students in learning about the history of how civil rights developed alongside music in the city, but also to develop in-class assignments and projects that will engage them in their own histories and contemporary experiences. A report by the Government Accountability Office found that in 2001, 14 million students of color attended racially and socioeconomically isolated public schools. In 2016, the number rose to 20 million. Yet it is not just students of color who are at a disadvantage by this growing segregation. White students lose out when they are confined to segregated schools as well by not being able to learn from other students and teachers with different cultural backgrounds. They are less prepared to live in a cosmopolitan society where differences are valued and seen as strengths.

To support the ongoing project of desegregation—in our hearts and minds, as well as in our institutions—this curriculum was developed with the best practices of collaborative ethnography developed by the Neighborhood Story Project (NSP) at the University of New Orleans. In 2012, the NSP partnered with the New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park to write a book with an intergenerational, multi-racial group of civil rights activists, musicians, and cultural activists about how passing on music in New Orleans has been tied to social justice and cross-cultural collaborations in the city since the early days of jazz. The result is *Talk That Music Talk: Passing On Brass Band Music in New Orleans the Traditional Way*, a 312-page book contains 32 in-depth life histories with over 550 archival and contemporary fine art photographs. It is a book about community organizing, and what you learn from participating in the music and storytelling of your community. The curriculum invites teachers and young people to build on these histories in their own classroom, and explore their own lineages.

Participating in music in New Orleans teaches young people to develop their own sound, but also to listen critically: to grasp the overall essence of what is being played or said, but also the nuances. Its pedagogy comes from a call and response that is deeply rooted in African American ethics. It is a way of learning that anyone can learn by joining in the musical conversation.

## What is “Racial” Segregation?

In the curriculum, we ask young people to consider how New Orleanians experienced segregation, but also defied it. For instance, at the beginning of the 1900s, an African American musician named Louis Contrell, Sr. learned to play music from his neighbor, a German boy named John Kornfeld. John took drums lessons and would come home and teach Louis. His son, Louis Jr., said that the two men developed a life-long friendship, and explained:

The things happening now, they happened way back then. It’s just that they had certain laws that tried to curtail these things. But even with the laws, it didn’t because as far as the real segregation, they didn’t have that as a whole [in New Orleans]. There was always mixture in the neighborhoods.

The leader of the Tremé Brass Band, Benny Jones Sr.’s neighborhood is a good example. He grew up outside of the French Quarter in Tremé:

It was a mixed neighborhood. We’ve got blacks and whites, we’ve got Mexicans all renting old double shotgun houses. We used to play together. Fight together. We were together every day on the corner next to Ruth’s Cozy Corner. We did everything but go to school and church together.

Trumpeter and teacher Gregg Stafford had a similar experience uptown in New Orleans:

The 2400 block was full of black children like myself, and the 2300 block of Freret that intersected our street was highly populated with white kids. We played football, shot marbles, rode our bikes together. But, according to the institutions, when it was time to go to school, they went one direction, we went the other direction.

Civil Rights leader, Jerome Smith, explained the impact of close connections outside of the institutionalized segregation:

I remember growing up, the white kids played with us until their parents came and got them. They’d be raising hell because they wanted to stay. That’s their natural spirit; they are emotionally comfortable, and I saw that.



Trumpeter Kenneth Terry in the Seventh Ward of New Orleans. In the 1960s, his family was voted onto the block by white families who controlled the rental properties in the neighborhood.

Ray Lambert, a member of the Storyville Stompers Brass Band, shares a personal experience of witnessing what happens when a white child ends up giving into the pressures around adult’s insistence on segregation.

I’ll give you a story that showed me how screwed up the whole thing really was...[My father and I] stepped outside to go somewhere and this black man comes walking by the house. My father says, “Hey so-and-so, how are you doing?” And the man says, “How are you doing?” And keeps walking. I said, “Who was that?” My dad told me the man’s name. It was like, “What is your connection?” He said, “We used to play together as kids.”

In this curriculum, we ask young people to consider their own families’ decisions, but also go deeper to address the history of the concept of race to show that categories we such as “black” and “white” are social constructions, not given biological realities.

## Music and Civil Rights

*[Jazz] came from this city, which has a different social fabric than the rest of the South—the rest of America. From its inception, black people used the streets and the music they created to express themselves. They invented something that prevented us from committing suicide. -Jerome Smith, Talk That MusicTalk*

After the Supreme Court case, *Homer V. Plessy*, which institutionalized “separate but equal,” African American benevolent societies, social aid and pleasure clubs, and carnival groups in New Orleans organized participatory street processions with music to demonstrate their

strength during a time of systematic disenfranchisement. The public performances were possible because the neighborhoods were integrated. Groups could move through the city because there were not rigid dividing lines. The music that was created from these street processions had a world wide impact on music and cultural arts.

Internationally well-known musicians from New Orleans such as Louis Armstrong, Sidney Bechet, and Jelly Roll Morton have written in their autobiographies of joining these street parades, which often brought together hundreds of people in nonviolent, community events. They understood that they were participating in a fertile training ground for developing a voice in music and in other areas of life. Civil Rights organizers in New Orleans also recognized the power and used the deep connections to community organizing to further political, social, and cultural equality in the city.

In the 1960s, civil rights leaders from New Orleans' chapter of Congress of Racial Equality (C.O.R.E.) helped to desegregate public spaces in New Orleans and participated in the Freedom Rides and Freedom Summers that spread across the Deep South. When they returned home, they combined their connections to the culture of music in the city to their political activism in different ways, including working with venues committed to traditional jazz, and developing community-based organizations that combined the political and cultural organizing. At the same time, music venues began to challenge the segregation laws that prohibited integration in public places.

*De jure* segregation in the South formally ended with the 1954 court case *Brown V Board of Education*, but it still took many years to integrate public institutions and spaces. It was not until 1967, for instance, that public schools in New Orleans were desegregated. Unfortunately, it takes more than just telling people to spend time together to make real change. Most schools in the city were only integrated for a few years, and then "white flight" out of these schools caused *de facto* segregation that existed in other parts of the country. *De facto* means "in actuality." Laws may have changed, but in reality, segregation continued.

It was during this era that the youth organization Tambourine and Fan was co-founded by C.O.R.E. members Jerome Smith and Rudy Lombard. With the help of other community members in the city, they mentored thousands of young people about the significance of the Civil



Young people parading with Tambourine and Fan on North Claiborne Avenue in New Orleans hold up photographs of community organizer Malcolm X, courtesy of Tambourine and Fan. Circa 1980.

Rights movements in New Orleans in the 1800s and the 1960s, and connected African American cultural arts traditions to global Black Arts Movements. In *Talk That Music Talk*, Jerome Smith shared the power of their moving classroom. In this curriculum, we combine its pedagogy with the methodologies of the Neighborhood Story Project, which were developed in the same communities 30 years later.

In those years in between, local experiences in Civil Rights Movements have often been glossed over in textbooks that give broad examples from a generalized American history. When asked about the organizing efforts, students tell us about Rosa Parks or Little Rock, but often do not know about the particular histories of their own places. Disconnected, they may not think about what their grandparents did during these times, or the impact of policy decisions on their own lives. We hope that this curriculum will help them connect family stories to broader cultural and historical experiences, and understand how their experiences are part of longer lineages. It is not lost on us that these lessons, in partnership with the National Park Service, were developed with Civil Rights workers who fought for justice at times when the federal government's institutions failed to support the pursuit of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" for all. They teach us that holding our public institutions accountable is an ongoing process as well.



# LOUISIANA TEACHERS

## STATE HISTORY STANDARDS

### Standard 1: Historical Thinking Skills

Students use facts and concepts to solve problems, interpret, analyze, and draw conclusions from historical events and to relate historical events to contemporary events.

**US.1.1** Produce clear and coherent writing for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences by:

- Conducting short and sustained research.
- Evaluating conclusions from evidence (broad variety, primary and secondary sources).
- Evaluating varied explanations for actions/events.
- Determining the meaning of words and phrases from historical texts.
- Analyzing historians' points of view.

**US.1.2:** Compare and/or contrast historical periods in terms of:

- Differing political, social, religious, or economic contexts.
- Similar issues, actions, and trends.
- Both change and continuity.-

**US.1.3** Propose and defend a specific point of view on a contemporary or historical issue and provide supporting evidence to justify that position

**US.1.5** Analyze historical periods using timelines, political cartoons, maps, graphs, debates, and other historical sources.

## STANDARD 5: Cold War Era

**US.5.4:** Describe the role and importance of the Civil Rights movement in the expansion of opportunities for African Americans in the United States.

## STATE CIVICS STANDARDS

### Standard 5: Role of the Citizen in American Democracy

Students examine how citizens can participate responsibly and effectively in American civic and political life.

**C.5.1:** Distinguish between personal, political, and economic rights of citizenship.

**C.5.2:** Differentiate between civic duties and responsibilities, including various forms of civic participation.

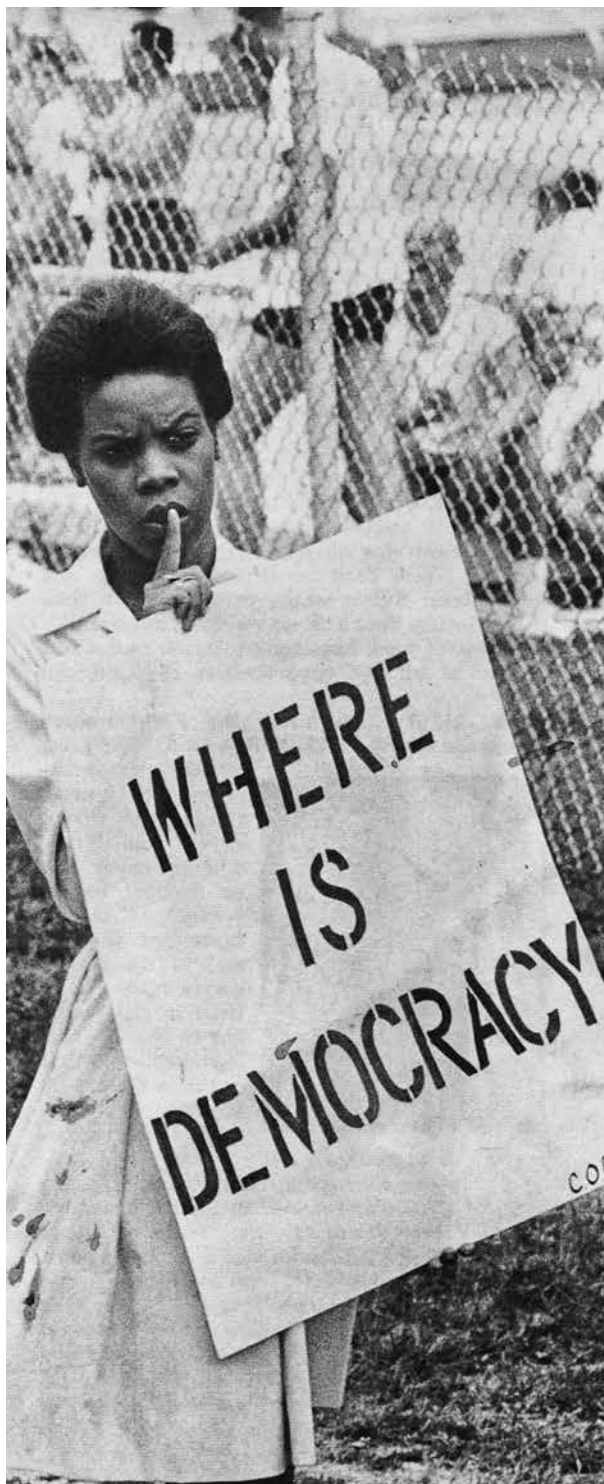
**C.5.3:** Describe how civil rights have evolved over time to include diverse groups of citizens.

**C.5.4:** Evaluate the role of the media and public opinion in American politics, including the use and effects of propaganda techniques.

**C.5.7:** Explain historical and contemporary roles of special interest groups, lobbyists, and associations in United States politics.

*For more information on Louisiana State Grade Level Expectations see: <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/academic-standards>*





An image from a Congress of Racial Equality pamphlet, courtesy of Doratha Smith Simmons.

# LESSONS

## RACE, CULTURE, & SOCIAL CHANGE

### Civil Rights and Music

We begin by introducing students to the ethnographic methods of cultural anthropology that were used to create *Talk That Music Talk*. The lessons begin by training students in anthropological understandings of culture and race, and use chapters from the book to help them prepare to critically engage the interconnection between the music of New Orleans, civil rights movements, and efforts to build movements for social justice in contemporary society.

Students will study the life histories of members of the New Orleans chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality, and their organizing work in New Orleans and around the American South. They will also spend time developing visual literacy through photographic analysis, develop active listening skills for participating in in-depth conversations and interviews, and have an opportunity to create dialogue with their classmates on the differences in the Jim Crow system in New Orleans and other parts of the South. They will also learn about the tactics used by supporters of integration to overcome segregation, specific instances taken by groups and individuals to change laws and policies, and how musicians have participated in the struggles. They will also work together to create their own events and “moving classrooms.”

**TIME REQUIRED:** The lessons range in time from one class period to several weeks. Although they build on each other, they can also stand on their own. Teachers should feel free to organize them to fit the needs of their classrooms.

# LESSON ONE

## THE CULTURE CONCEPT

### Welcome to Cultural Anthropology

**Overview:** This lesson introduces students to basic concepts and methods in cultural anthropology. It teaches them the core concepts of culture that will help them understand ethnographic research.



Learning New Orleans culture: The Young Traditional Brass Band. Photograph by Bruce Sunpie Barnes.

#### LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Introduce students to Cultural Anthropology.
- Introduce students to key terms in the study of culture.
- Introduce students to the stages of ethnographic fieldwork.

#### TIME REQUIRED

Two-three class periods of at least 50 minutes, depending on the length of the discussions.

#### MATERIALS NEEDED

- Introduction and Will Hightower's chapters in *Talk That Music Talk*
- Handout of Will Hightower's Stages of Fieldwork

## SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

**STEP 1:** Read the introduction in *Talk That Music Talk*, “Music for All Ages: Towards a Collective Voice” together. Each student can take a paragraph to read out-loud so there is a shared experience.

**STEP 2:** Ask the class to take five minutes to do a quick “free write” on what the chapter was about. Free-writing is a method of writing developed by creative writers like Natalie Goldberg (see her excellent book *Writing Down the Bones*) to help tap into deep memory and cultivate a strong voice in writing. The Neighborhood Story Project uses it to help students do ethnographic writing and connect with what is important to them. The rules are simple. A timed exercise, ask students to write continuously (without stopping or worrying about editing for punctuation, grammar, or clarity). It is okay if the writing goes in unexpected directions. The point is to not edit. This technique teaches “flow” in memory and develops strong writing and thinking skills.

**STEP 3:** Ask the class to share some of their responses, and help them track their thoughts by writing important contributions on the board.

**STEP 4:** If need be, the following set of questions can also be used to guide a discussion:

- How are all the people in the book connected? *The people are connected through the partnership formed between the New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park’s Music for All Ages Program and the Black Men of Labor Social Aid and Pleasure Club.*
- What did the older musicians and activists want to share with the book project and what did the younger musicians want to talk about? *The older generation wanted to share how the history of civil rights was important to the music, what the traditional music and parading styles have been, and how you can make a life for yourself and your community in music. The younger musicians learned the traditional styles but are also anxious to expand their horizons.*
- How did the young people learn the music? *By joining a program that had them sit in with traditional brass bands organized by Bruce Barnes, a musician and interpretive park ranger. Once they learned how to play their instruments, Bruce helped*

*them start their own band and play at the Black Men of Labor parade and other gigs around the city.*

- What was the chosen method of teaching music and why was it important? *Ear training teaches you to listen to a piece of music and figure out what key it is in, and how to play the notes without looking at sheet music. It teaches musicians how to work with others. It is the beginning of improvisation.*
- Why are parades a special part of learning music in New Orleans? *Second lines are participatory parades organized by African American benevolent societies called social aid and pleasure clubs. There are over 50 clubs in New Orleans, and each one hosts a parade with a brass band to celebrate their anniversary. The parade moves through the neighborhood where the club was founded, and anyone is invited to join in behind the band. This participation is called the “second line.” A large crowd represents a successful parade because people in the community want to support it. Musicians say they learn a great deal by playing in the parades (which last four hours ) because they are playing surrounded by dancers who are following their music.*

**STEP 5:** The immersion process that the young musicians talk about in the book is similar to what anthropologists experience when they learn about a new culture. Using the “Teaching the Culture Concept” guide, lead students through a class discussion to teach them the foundational concepts of cultural anthropology and its main method of inquiry—ethnography.

**STEP 7:** Have the students break into pairs and read Will Hightower’s chapter in *Talk That Music Talk*. Afterwards, they can work together to answer the questions on the worksheet. If time permits, the class can discuss their answers together.

## TEACHING THE CULTURE CONCEPT: A Classroom Discussion Guide with Key Terms

**Cultural Anthropology:** A social science committed to the study of cultures around the world.

**Culture:** Students often think of “culture” as food, religion, music, and festivals. However, anthropologist will explain that they are actually the *products of culture*—not culture itself. From an anthropological perspective, culture is a *system of meaning* that a group of people are taught and use to communicate with each other. The symbols that we use to communicate are arbitrary—they are given meaning by the people who agree upon them. This can be a difficult concept to understand, but students love to talk about it once they are given a road map because they realize they are participating in systems all the time.

You can begin by getting them to think about how sounds become words. As we know, there are thousands of different words for the same thing in languages around the world. One word is not better than another—they each develop in a different context and are understandable to the people who have given it meaning. Over time, word uses can change and be given other meaning. For instance, musicians often talk about the importance of “woodshedding.” A small building outside behind the house symbolizes a lot more for a musician; it is a kind of practicing you do by yourself. Paul Klemperer explains:

*It is a recognition of the need to sequester oneself and dig into the hard mechanics of the music before you can come back and play with a group in public. There's something philosophical, almost religious, about the term. The musical treasures of jazz are not easily accessed. You have to dig deep into yourself, discipline yourself, become focused on the music and your instrument, before you can unlock the treasure chest.*

When you start learning something new, you have to learn the symbols that create a system of meaning. Ask students if they have ever done something like this before. Have they ever joined something new? What was it like? Have them give some examples and help them think about the way meaning is created. It could be the language used in a sport, a dance, a club. At the beginning, everything is confusing and you have to learn about how

to participate. You have to learn how to talk to people, what their gestures mean, why they wear certain clothing and jewelry, and what your role could be in the rituals that help bring people together. In short, they are doing some *ethnography* without even realizing it.

**Ethnography:** A form of qualitative research also known as participant observation. To do this kind of research, you have to directly participate in the culture you want to study, but you also have to take field notes, talk to people, and develop more in-depth interviews to make sure that you are understanding what you are learning, and that your interpretations align with what other people in the culture think they are doing. If you are studying a culture that you already belong to, you have to take steps back to *defamiliarize* yourself from what you take for granted. As Zora Neale Hurston wrote in *Mules and Men* about studying her own culture:

It was only when I was off in college, away from my native surroundings that I could see myself like somebody else and stand off and look at my garment. Then I had to have the spy-glass of Anthropology to look through at that.

Whether you choose to do fieldwork far away or close to home, you have different stages of ethnography:

- **Entrée:** Your entrance into a culture. How did you learn about this culture? How were you able to participate in it? Who did you need to talk to? What did you need to do?
- **Culture Shock:** Once you are in a new culture—or system of meaning—you may experience a disorientation based on a loss of familiar cues. The way people interact with each other may be different and you may not know what is the “right” or the “wrong” way to do something. Your reactions to the disorientation can be subtle or very dramatic. People can experience shyness, homesickness, or anger. Often you have the feeling like a child because you cannot communicate on the level you are used to participating. You will notice the smells, tastes, sights, and sounds in greater detail because they are all new. If you

are an anthropologist, your senses are important guides. They usually create powerful memories.

- *Developing Rapport:* The next stage is when you begin to understand enough that you start to feel more comfortable participating. Your confidence will go up as other people accept what you are doing, and that you are making a contribution. To really develop rapport, anthropologists need to do their own form of woodshedding. They need to practice and they need to take notes on what is going on around them.

- *Understanding Culture:* The final stage is when you have the knowledge to understand the meaning behind the culture. Why are people doing things this way? What does it say about how they see themselves as individuals and also as a group? You are able to share what you have learned with others.

When anthropologists are doing fieldwork, they have to be aware of the process of fieldwork, and keep an open mind to learn about the culture they are studying. This open mind is developed through practicing **cultural relativity**, a critical concept developed by an anthropologist named Franz Boas, who argued that each culture must be understood on its own terms, not on those of outsiders. This does not mean that we have to accept everything that a culture does, but we need to be aware of our own biases, and recognize that just because something is different does not mean that it is necessarily wrong. However, this can be a difficult to fully achieve because of **ethnocentrism**: Societies all over the world believe that their way is the right way. We may judge other groups negatively based on our own standards and want them to change their ways of doing things to fit our way.

Finally, there are two other terms that students can put in their anthropological tool kit to be able to help them begin to unpack ethnocentrism.

**Social Construction:** Culture is learned behavior, and has nothing to do with biology. A baby born anywhere in the world could be relocated to another culture and learn

the language, customs, dances, and music as easily as a child born to parents from that culture. We teach culture, and the categories we give to people are created by people. They can change.

**Historical particularism:** Another important concept that came from Franz Boas. It is the idea that we need to look to the past to understand what's going on in a culture today. Cultures are not set in stone. Their rules, traditions, rituals, and music—to name just a few—change over time. We need to understand their history, and how important events may have impacted people's lives, to be able to gain a better sense of why they do what they do. It will help us have a better understanding of their current perspectives.

**Code-switching:** When we learn to move between different settings, we learn to code-switch. We may talk differently to our grandparents than we do our siblings or friends. We learn that different cultures have different signs of respect, honor, and familiarity. We may have to change the way we interact to be able to show that we understand these ways of being. Learning to move from one way of communicating to another is called code-switching.

## WILL HIGHTOWER'S STAGES OF FIELDWORK

**Directions:** Find a partner and read Will Hightower's chapter in *Talk That Music Talk* (Pages 104-113) together. You can alternate between the voices of Will and his two mentors, Benny Jones, Sr. and Roger Lewis. While you are reading, pay attention to how his experiences with music fit into the different stages of fieldwork that anthropologists go through to learn about a different culture. When you finish the chapter, work together to fill out the questions below.

1. Where does Will live and what is he doing with his time prior to getting interested in music?
  
2. What was his most significant entrée into music and why?
  
3. Who have been important people in the world of music for him and where did he meet them?
  
4. What were his experiences of "culture shock?" How did he begin to overcome them?
  
5. How did Will begin to develop his own voice in music, or, in the words of anthropologists, begin to "develop rapport?"
  
6. How does his experiences with music influence how he sees the different schools that he attends?
  
7. On page 111, Will says, "If you go in thinking it's just a piece of music, you are going to miss it because it's an entire cultural entity of its own." What does he mean?

**Lagniappe** ("Something extra" in Louisiana French): Research the music that Will talks about in the chapter. Listen to music from the Dirty Dozen Brass Band, the Tremé Brass Band, and the different clarinet players. How is the sound that Will is trying to play on the instrument different and/or similar to the other bands?



## WILL HIGHTOWER'S STAGES OF FIELDWORK

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1. Where does Will live and what is he doing with his time prior to getting interested in music?

*Will's parents grew up in New Orleans and he visited his great-grandmother in the city, but he grew up in a suburb called Metairie. He was a shy kid who did karate to help with his coordination. He also played a lot of video games.*

2. What was his most significant entrée into music and why?

*Will decided to play music in the band at school to get out of P.E., but this was not because he had a love of a music. A love of music developed when members of the Dirty Dozen Brass Band lived with him after Hurricane Katrina. One of the members told his family about Music for All Ages, and this is where he began to learn how to play New Orleans brass band music. When he heard jazz clarinetists, he started had role models to follow.*

3. Who have been important people in the world of music for him and where did he meet them?

*Roger Lewis was a family friend. Like a lot of young people, when Will was growing up he didn't think that much about what Roger did for a living. It wasn't until he started playing with other brass band musicians in the music program that he realized that the Dirty Dozen was a world-famous band. From these musicians, he gained confidence to take on some of his own schooling issues. He transferred schools and joined another brass band musician, Desmond Veneble's, marching band program. By this time, Will understood enough about music to realize what a good teacher he was.*

4. What were his experiences of "culture shock?" How did he begin to overcome them?

*When he first started playing music, Will's extreme shyness made it hard for him to play in a band. He talks about how nervous he was to take a solo, but the other musicians continued to ask him to do it until he started to gain more confidence. Being around a diverse group of students helped him in other social situations as well.*

5. Will talks to Benny and Roger about developing his own voice in music, or, in the words of anthropologists, "developing rapport." What does Will say helped him, and what do the other musicians recommend?

*Will says studying with other clarinet and saxophone players helped him develop his own voice. He branched out to other music programs and participated in the New Orleans Young Traditional Brass Band where he played in the Black Men of Labor parade. Getting to play alongside other professional musicians was disorienting but afterwards he realized he had learned a lot about how to develop his own sound. Benny says playing professionally is important, and that you don't have to talk a lot to be the leader. Roger Lewis tells him the interaction between the musicians and the dancers in the parade is important in New Orleans music. The call and response pushes musicians to develop new ways of playing.*

6. How does his experiences with music influence how he sees the different schools that he attends?

*He realized that a lot of the problems he was having in other areas of his schooling were around the close-mindedness of his classmates. He decided to go to a public school that didn't have as good of an academic reputation, but had a student body that was more accepting. Diversity became an important part of what he values in education and in his social life.*

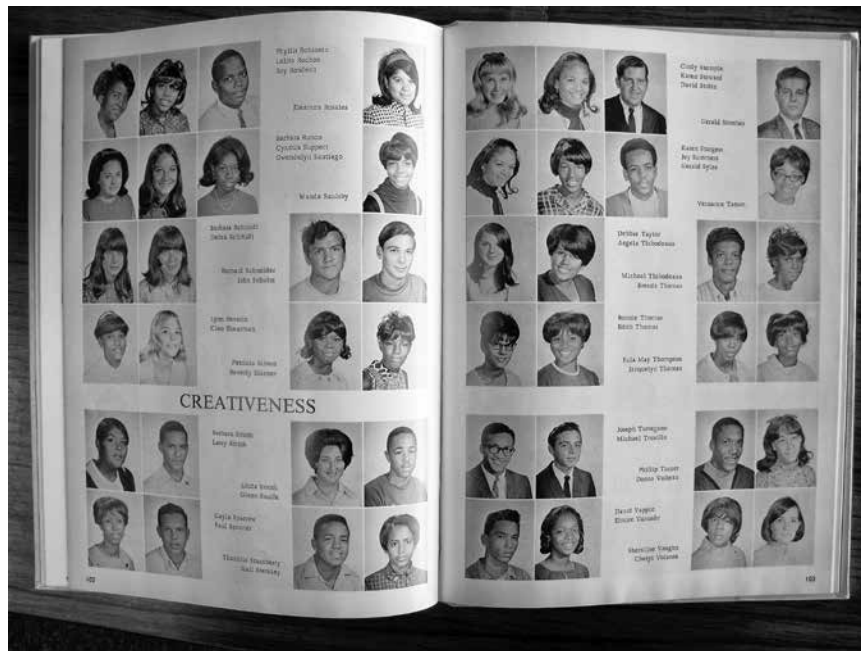
7. On page 111, Will says, "If you go in thinking it's just a piece of music, you are going to miss it because it's an entire cultural entity of its own." What does he mean? *By playing music in brass bands in New Orleans, Will also got to have a new relationship with the city. The music takes people through different stages of life. When a musician dies, they are honored by their community of musicians with a jazz funeral. Will talks about playing at Lionel Batiste, Sr.'s jazz funeral, which was one of the largest on record. As the bass drummer for the Tremé Brass Band, Uncle Lionel had become an icon of jazz music in the city, and was one of the mentors in the Music for All Ages program.*

# LESSON TWO

## THE SOCIAL CATEGORIES OF RACE

Where do they come from?

**Overview:** One of the main conversations in *Talk That Music Talk* revolves around race and music. This lesson is designed to prepare students to participate in the experiences that the activists and musicians share with them. Physical anthropologist Ashley Montague called race “man’s most dangerous myth.” Critical studies of race show that the categories of “white” and “black” are not based in biology, but were created by European societies in the 1700s to justify colonialism and slavery. Separation continued after slavery was abolished in the United States with the Supreme Court case *Plessy v. Ferguson*, which legalized racial segregation. This lesson teaches students to recognize that although people use racial terms to identify themselves and others, they are not biological, and are based on a foundation of inequity.



High school yearbook for John McDonogh Senior High in the late 1960s after the white school was desegregated in 1967. The pictures show the diversity of students who came from the Sixth and Seventh Ward neighborhoods. By the early 1970s, almost all the white students had left. John Mac remained 98% African American until it closed a few years after Hurricane Katrina.

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Students will understand the relatively recent rise of the use of racial categories.
- Students will deconstruct the “common sense” of these categories.
- Students will become familiar with the Harlan dissent and consider how Jim Crow segregation laws were enforced.
- Students will examine the lived experiences of multiple people during an era of inequality as a precursor to Civil Rights organizing.

### TIME REQUIRED

Between two-three 50 minute class periods, depending on the length of discussions and presentations from students.

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- An open mind
- Handout of Harlan Dissent
- Handout of Questions and Decisions

## SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Race can be a difficult topic to talk about for both teachers and students. Entire courses are taught on it. The nightly news and day-to-day conversations go on about it. Everyone has had to make decisions around the classifications. Most people have painful experiences and are often left with a lot of questions. Despite the difficulty, students report that learning about the history of race with their peers is one of the most important experiences in their education, and have helped them be more open-minded in all aspects of their lives. These lesson plans are designed to help teachers lead a critical discussion on both the history and contemporary experiences.

**STEP 1:** Begin by acknowledging that race is a difficult topic to talk about, and the goal of the unit will be to build trust and respect between everyone in the classroom. Part of the reason race is difficult to discuss is because we often don't look at the assumptions about it. It seems like "common sense." But what is it? When we look deeper, what seems straightforward becomes fuzzy.

- Ask students what the categories of race are and what the physical characteristics are for each category. Write their answers on the board.
- Ask students whether these terms are biological. You don't have to correct them. *At this point in the lesson, they should just take inventory on what they have been thinking about it.*
- Is one category seen as better than others? Do you have any evidence of why or why not? *The point here is to let them become aware of their own assumptions.*
- Does anyone know how long we have been using these terms and/or where they come from?

**STEP 2:** Modern concepts of race developed in the early 1700s. What else was going on around the world during this time? *European colonialism, trans-Atlantic slave trade, the Enlightenment.* In *Invitation to Anthropology*, Luke Eric Lassiter shares an example of how the founder of modern taxonomy, Charles Linneaus, classified people:

***Homo sapiens europaeus (white):*** white, serious, strong. Hair blond, flowing. Eyes blue. Active, very smart, inventive. Covered by tight clothing. Ruled by law.

***Homo sapiens asiaticus (yellow):*** Yellow, melancholy, greedy. Hair black. Eyes dark. Severe, haughty, desirous. Covered by loose garments. Ruled by opinion.

***Homo sapiens americanus (red):*** Red, ill-tempered subjugated. Hair black, straight, thick. Nostrils wide. Face harsh, beard scanty. Obstinate, contented, free. Paints himself with red lines. Ruled by customs.

***Homo sapiens afer (black):*** black, impassive, lazy. Hair kinked. Skin silly. Nose flat. Lips thick. Women with genital flap, breasts large. Crafty, slow, foolish. Anoints himself with grease. Ruled by caprice.

Follow up questions could include:

- Are these neutral categories? *No, they are hierarchical.*
- How do they relate to the anthropological understanding of ethnocentrism. *The invention of race is an extreme form of ethnocentrism, developed during a time when many European powers were justifying conquest and mass slavery.*
- What happens when people in the category of "white" have more power? How will they make decisions if they are taught to believe these terms? *Scientists have long disproven race a biological category. The categories are subjective and arbitrary. As Lassiter has written, "The history of human races...shows us a mankind that is always on the move....no one human group has ever stayed put or been isolated enough to create a separate population that would be able to be considered a subspecies or race"*

**STEP 4:** Have the students "de-construct" how races are classified. Some examples can include:

- Skin tone varies from very light to very dark. How do we draw lines? People from the Mediterranean often share a skin tone similar to those from Northern Africa, but they are often put into different categories of "white" and "black." In addition, the categories themselves are not stable. In the U.S. we have a "dual-race" system that some people call the "one drop rule." At one point, if you were of 1/32nd African heritage, you were considered "black." In Brazil, the Caribbean, (and New Orleans for a long time), there was a category on census records called "mulatto." In Latin America, there is a category that acknowl-

## LOUISIANA LOSES TWO GREAT SONS IN ONE DAY.

**Ernest B. Kruttschnitt, Leader in Legal  
and Democratic Circles, Passes  
Away,**

**After a Career Replete With Honor and Devoted  
to the Public Service.**

**Was President of the Constitutional Con-  
vention Which Secured White  
Supremacy in State.**

**Judge Walter H. Rogers, Former Attorney General  
and Exemplary Soldier and Citizen, Also  
Succumbs—Both Presidents of  
School Board.**



ERNEST B. KRUTTSCHNITT

An obituary for E.B. Kruttschnitt, one of the architects of segregation and black disenfranchisement in Louisiana, in *The Times Picayune* is evidence of the common place language of white supremacy used in the press before the Civil Rights Movement.

edges mixture between Europeans and Native people—mestizo. It's possible for people to "change race" when they move from one place to another. Often times, people from the Caribbean, Latin America, or India will say, "I never thought of myself as black (or white), but in the U.S. that's how I'm defined." As census categories change, people's identities can change, too. Here are some other examples:

- For a long time, Jews were not considered white and were put in their own racial category.
- Through most of the 1800s, Irish and Southern European immigrants were also excluded from the white category.
- In addition, many European immigrants did not identify as white when they first moved to the United States. We have records of Eastern European immigrants referring to "the whites," which referred to light skinned European Americans who had been in the U.S. for generations, not themselves.

For more resources on teaching on the social construction of race see:

- Luke Eric Lassiter's *Invitation to Anthropology*. Published by Rowman & Littlefield (2014).
- The American Anthropological Association's "Statement on Race": <http://www.americananthro.org/ConnectWithAAA/Content.aspx?ItemNumber=2583>
- *Race: Are We So Different* has three interactive portals—history, human variation, and lived experience—to share with students: <http://www.understandingrace.org>

**STEP 5:** Anthropologists and scientists have debunked the biological concept of race, but it is still a powerful social category that has been used to divide people for a number of centuries. The physical anthropologist Ashley Montagu has called America's "Original Sin." As anthropologists know, myths sanction and help shape action. They are most effective when they go unrecognized for what they are, and shape the way we see the world around us.

The history of New Orleans, with its ties to French and Spanish colonialism, as well as the expansion of the Unit-

ed States through the Louisiana Purchase, has disrupted some of these myths. Because the legal system was set up differently than other parts of the U.S., it showed that other ways of interacting were possible. The civil rights activism that throughout the 1800s not only challenged discrimination, but the very concept of race. If time permits, there are a number of great resources to lead students through this history:

- *We As Freeman: Plessy V. Ferguson*, by Keith Medley, is about the civil rights organizing that happened in the city in the mid to late 1800s, and the Supreme Court case that led to *de jure* segregation.

- The documentary film *Fauborg Tremé* is a good introduction to the same time period.

- Students at the Center, an important writing program in New Orleans, published *The Long Ride*, a wonderful collection of high school student writings about civil rights organizing in Louisiana. Parts Three and Four include in-depth time lines of the late 1800s. A PDF is available at: <http://www.sacnola.com/thelongride2/>

**STEP 6:** Distribute hand-outs on the Harlan dissent from *Plessy V. Ferguson* and the quotes from musicians in *Talk That Music Talk*.

- Read part of the Harlan dissent and ask students to think about what it would have been like to enforce these rules on people. Do they agree with Harlan that it creates hatred? Even after these laws have been taken down, what are the impacts of separating people?

**STEP 7:** Ask students to break into small groups and assign one of the quotes from musicians on the hand-out for each group to discuss. Have them present their answer to the class in the order listed below. See the key for notes on leading a discussion.

**STEP 8:** If time permits, students can write a reflection or longer piece about the long-term consequences of the *Plessy V. Ferguson* decision.

- Ask students to take ten to 15 minutes to do a “free-write” on the long-term impacts of segregation in their own lives. They can focus on what it is like at their schools, in their neighborhoods, and/or friendship groups. Ask them to concentrate on actual experiences rather than their general opinion.

- Depending on the class size, students can move into a circle with the whole group or stay in the small groups to share their reflections. Ask the other students to take notes on what they liked about it and what they wanted to know more about. They can share these reflections before moving onto the next person. This provides a safe way for students to engage with each other’s writing without being defensive.

- From this feedback, students can write a memoir, or conduct further research to learn about how their experiences are connected to policy decisions.



## “SEPARATE BUT EQUAL” AND THE HARLAN DISSENT

In 1896, the Supreme Court of the United States gave its verdict in *Plessy v. Ferguson*. The court case had begun in New Orleans as a protest against discrimination in public transportation, but turned into a test of whether separating people into “races” would be ruled constitutional. The Court’s seven to one decision sanctioned “Jim Crow” and added another legal way to the use of race to categorize and separate people. The majority opinion argued that separation was not inherently unequal. However, the ruling occurred at a time when politicians and community leaders openly advocated for “white supremacy.” The lone dissent on the Supreme Court came from Justice John Marshall Harlan. Although Harlan does not dispute the categories of race, he acknowledges that they are set up to put the “white” race above others.



The “For Colored Only” sign on the streetcar marked the day-to-day realities of Jim Crow segregation in New Orleans. Photograph courtesy of the Charles Frank Studio Collection at The Historic New Orleans Collection, 1979.325.6222

*In my opinion, the judgment this day rendered will, in time, prove to be quite as pernicious as the decision made by this tribunal in the Dred Scott Case. It was adjudged in that case that the descendants of Africans who were imported into this country and sold as slaves were not included nor intended to be included under the word “citizens” in the Constitution, and could not claim any of the rights and privileges which that instrument provided for and secured to citizens of the United States; that, at the time of the adoption of the Constitution, they were considered as a subordinate and inferior class of beings, who had been subjugated by the dominant race, and, whether emancipated or not, yet remained subject to their authority, and had no rights or privileges but such as those who held the power and the government might choose to grant them.*

*The recent amendments of the Constitution, it was supposed, had eradicated these principles from our institutions. But it seems that we have yet, in some of the States, a dominant race— a superior class of citizens, which assumes to regulate the enjoyment of civil rights, common to all citizens, upon the basis of race. The present decision, it may well be apprehended, will not only stimulate aggressions, more or less brutal and irritating, upon the admitted rights of colored citizens, but will encourage the belief that it is possible, by means of state enactments, to defeat the beneficent purposes which the people of the United States had in view when they adopted the recent amendments of the Constitution, by one of which the blacks of this country were made citizens of the United States and of the States in which they respectively reside, and whose privileges and immunities, as citizens, the States are forbidden to abridge. Sixty millions of whites are in no danger from the presence here of eight millions of blacks. The destinies of the two races in this country are indissolubly linked together, and the interests of both require that the common government of all shall not permit the seeds of race hate to be planted under the sanction of law. What can more certainly arouse race hate, what more certainly create and perpetuate a feeling of distrust between these races, than state enactments which, in fact, proceed on the ground that colored citizens are so inferior and degraded that they cannot be allowed to sit in public coaches occupied by white citizens. That, as all will admit, is the real meaning of such legislation as was enacted in Louisiana.*

After the court ruling, state and local governments passed other laws and ordinances to separate people. Then came the issue of enforcement. In 1921, Mrs. Mary Glenn Cashman and Mrs. Jeanne Serpas Ruiz sat in the “white-only” section of the streetcar on North Claiborne Avenue in New Orleans and refused to move after the conductor accused them of “being Negro.” Like Homer Plessy and Rosa Parks, the women were arrested. In protest, they filed a lawsuit against the transit company and won a settlement. This example is one of countless decisions that people of every “racial” background made each day in how to live together, or further apart, under state-sanctioned segregation.

## QUESTIONS & DECISIONS

**Directions:** In your small group, read your assigned quote from a musician in *Talk That Music Talk*. Discuss what happens in their story, and how people's lives were impacted by living in a society organized by race. What choices did they make around them? How did the history of racial categories developed by scientists like Linneaus and the experiences of living under racial segregation impact their decisions? What have you experienced or witnessed? As a group, be prepared to share your answers with the class.



**Anthony Bennett:** My grandmother Na Na spoke patois. Half of the time you couldn't understand what she was saying. She would say, "Look, but in Creole, "Gardé ca." She sang little Creole songs to you, too. Uncle Lionel Batiste used to call her "Talk of the Town." She was a tall woman and very outspoken. She told me about when the police chief of New Orleans, David Hennessey, was killed in 1890. People were running around the city yelling, "They killa da chief!" They started rounding up Sicilians. My uncle could have easily been confused for one. They had to put him in the vegetable cart to sneak him out of the neighborhood. It was hard to tell the difference between a lot of Sicilians and blacks back then. (Page 117)



**Joseph Torregano:** The inquiries I get about who I am are unbelievable. If people try to guess, Spanish is probably number one, and then it ranges. Anything from Filipino to Pakistani could be possible. It usually begins with, "Do you mind if I ask you a personal question?" If I say no, they will ask "What is your ethnic background?" I tell them, "African-American." It confuses them. If I add, "I'm from New Orleans," they might get it... There was a very ugly split in the family because some of my father's family crossed the color line and passed for white. My father was a tad darker than me. He could pass for Spanish, but he was always proud of who we were. (Page 141)



**Will Hightower:** My great-grandmother was really, really old. She lived over on Orleans Avenue by Bayou St. John. My mom tells funny stories about her. How she used to walk with an umbrella every day to get to work because she was Spanish and she didn't want her skin to get any darker. This was a time when, if you were a certain color, they wouldn't let you work certain places. (Page 105)



**Woody Penouilh:** I grew up Catholic during segregation. Even when I was a kid, I questioned why there had to be separation. I went to school with white people. The street I lived on, Esplanade Avenue, was almost all white. A lot of the side streets were black. My mother learned French from her grandmother and went to an all-white girls school. My daddy spoke Cajun French. It used to hurt my heart so much to see the way white people were treating black people. There was so much trouble in the schools—to feel like a person should be shunned for the color of their skin. (Page 193)



**Kenneth Terry:** My mom was actually the first black lady to move into that block between Marais and Urquhart. It was pre-integration, and, during that time, it was mainly Caucasian. The block voted to see if you could meet their standards to be around Caucasian people. Here's an interesting thing about "race." My dad grew up a country boy in Napoleonville, Louisiana, and part of his family there is actually Caucasian. A lot of people don't know that. On the other side, my mom's dad was the darkest child in the family. They used to call him Midnight. Yes. And my mom inherited her skin tone from him. My parents connected and were together for 46 years. The 1200 block of Frenchmen voted about them, and, as a family, we passed. (Page 167)



**Will Smith:** Ray and I got to be a lot better personal friends when we went to China. The other guys in the band were tall, but I was tall and black. And so everywhere I went, they took me in the back room. Everywhere. They're going through everything. Digging through all my stuff. I wanted to say, "Yes, I'm still black. The passport is valid." At the end Ray said, "I never paid attention to profiling as much as I do now." (Page 239)

## QUESTIONS & DECISIONS

**Directions:** In your small group, read your assigned quote from a musician in *Talk That Music Talk*. Discuss what happens in their story, and how people's lives were impacted by living in a society organized by race. What choices did they make around them? How did the history of racial categories developed by scientists like Linneaus and the experiences of living under racial segregation impact their decisions? What have you experienced or seen happen as you've grown up? As a group, be prepared to share your answers with the class.



**1. Anthony Bennett:** In 1891, a few years before *Plessy V Ferguson*, the Irish-American police chief of New Orleans was said to have been killed by Sicilian immigrants. During a time when Sicilians were not considered “white,” they were attacked indiscriminately. What happens to Anthony Bennett’s family? *The skin color and facial features of Sicilians and many Creole New Orleanians were similar, and people couldn’t tell them apart. It is an example of how racial categories are not consistent, and often are used to keep people in a lower rung of the social ladder.*



**2. Joseph Torregano:** Joe’s family is Sicilian and African-American. More than 100 years after the lynching of Sicilians, people are not sure what racial category to put him in. What does this show about people in U.S. society? *Many people are used to thinking in narrow terms of “black” and “white,” and are not sure where to “place” those that don’t fit into this framework. He said some of his family took advantage of this confusion and claimed being “white.”* What were the consequences of “passing”? Why did some people, like Joe’s father, decide not to?



**3. Will Hightower:** The story of Will’s great-grandmother mirrors Joe Torregano’s story. His grandmother’s skin tanned enough to be considered by many to be “colored.” She tried to protect herself from racial discrimination by staying out of the sun. What does this say about “race”? *Again, it shows that the lines that are drawn around race are arbitrary. However, people often try to protect privileges they may receive from being designated “white.”*



**4. Woody Penouilh:** Woody’s family background is French and Cajun. His family is raised in white-only institutions, but he questions why that means he cannot associate with other people. What does Woody’s story show about race? Does it seem like he has someone to talk to about it? *Although the law was set up for someone like Woody to benefit from segregation, he did not agree with it. He felt like he might be losing something, too.*



**5. Kenneth Terry:** What do students think about using the term “Caucasian”? *The racial categories used by eugenicists continue to be used, but have taken slightly different connotations. Often times, “Caucasian” is used in an attempt to show neutrality instead of using the more charged word “white,” but the term itself comes from pseudo-science.* How does the story of the vote around housing discrimination connected to Harlan’s dissent? *Harlan predicted that the decision to declare “separate but equal” constitutional would lead to more wide-scale discrimination. Kenneth tells the story of racial discrimination in housing. It is ironic that white families believing they were judging the character of a “black” family didn’t realize they came from a diverse background.*



**6. Will Smith:** How is racial profiling connected to the history of racial classifications? *By associating negative characteristics to certain skin colors, these racial categories shaped the opinions and actions of people all over the world.* Ray Lambert, a member of the band Will is traveling with who is white, was struck by what he was witnessing. What is he implying in his comments to Will? *When you don’t have to worry about being judged by the color of your skin, you often don’t notice how many times people who are of a dark complexion have to deal with the profiling. But if you spend time with them, you can begin to see the way profiling occurs.*



# LESSON THREE

## PHOTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

### An Introduction to the Civil Rights Movement

**Overview:** This lesson introduces students to the Civil Rights Movement's direct-actions against segregation. In the 1960s, the New Orleans chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality participated in the Freedom Rides throughout the South. Students will examine a collection of photographs that includes four mug shots of C.O.R.E. activists and a Mississippi cotton field. They will then complete the Archival Photograph Worksheet, and engage in a discussion about the civil rights movement and contemporary social justice issues.



*Left:* In the early 1960s, many cotton plantations in Mississippi were not mechanized, and people worked the land by hand. This photograph by Dorothea Lange from the 1930s shows cotton fieldworkers at the Aldridge Plantation in Washington County. The scene is similar to the work Jerome Smith would have witnessed during his organizing work in Mississippi. Photograph courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Farm Security Administration, Office of War Information Collection, LC USF34-017135-C. *Right:* Mugshots [clockwise from top left] of Julia Aaron, Dave Dennis, Jean Thompson, and Jerome Smith after they were arrested during the Freedom Rides through Mississippi. Photographs courtesy of the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission's photograph collection housed at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. The Commission was the state's official counter Civil Rights agency, which ran from 1956 to 1973, and kept an extensive archive of its surveillance of Civil Rights workers.

#### LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Introduce or allow for practice of photograph analysis as a means of historical research and understanding.
- Deepen understanding of the conditions of rural life and work.
- Deepen understanding of struggles of the Civil Rights Era.
- Deepen appreciation for the struggles of advocates of Civil Rights.

#### TIME REQUIRED

Two class periods of at least 30 minutes.

#### MATERIALS NEEDED

- Archival photographs on page 25 of *Talk That Music Talk*.
- Handout of Archival Photographs Worksheet

## SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

**STEP 1:** Distribute photograph analysis sheet. If students are not familiar with photographic analysis, walk them through the sheet, explaining expectations. You can also do a trial group analysis using another photograph.

**STEP 2:** Have students turn to p.25 and direct them to the photographs at the top of the page, and the Archival Photograph Worksheet. Although students can read the caption, their job is to form their own impressions, not simply recount what the book tells them.

- Set a two-minute time frame for them to observe without writing.

**STEP 3:** At the end of the two minutes, direct them to Section 2 of the hand-out, “Taking Notes.” They will have five to ten minutes to complete this part of the chart using their own observations and impressions.

**STEP 4:** Class discussion.

- If possible, use a smart board to project the photographs and document analysis sheet.
- Ask students to share their observations of the photographs and the photographers. If the images are projected, they can come up to the board and point out different parts of the images.
- Students will fill-in other impressions from their classmates during discussion, adding extra sheets if necessary.

*Follow Up Questions:*

- Why would the four persons in the mug shots put themselves at risk by facing arrest?
- Imagine the thoughts of young New Orleans men and women when they saw field workers like people in the photograph.
- How might seeing people working in the fields impact the New Orleans young people’s attitudes towards work and schooling?
- Imagine the thoughts of the field workers when they saw young people from New Orleans coming into their

county and breaking segregation laws.

- Imagine the thoughts of white landowners when young civil rights workers came to their county to challenge segregation laws.

- How did the segregation of public places play a role in maintaining a system in which poor rural black families were the main workforce on lands owned by wealthy whites?

- What is an injustice in your community that needs to be changed?

- How would people react if groups from outside the community came to challenge it?

- What would you do to support the change?

**STEP 5:** After the class discussion, students will read Jerome Smith’s chapter, and return to the original photographs. How did their impressions of the photographs develop after reading about Jerome’s experiences with the Freedom Rides in Mississippi. Some follow-up questions could include:

- What did Jerome say about the woman who raised her hand “on solo” to show her support?
- How were the conditions in Mississippi different than New Orleans? What about where your students live?
- Why is it important to preserve these kinds of photographs?

**STEP 6:** If time permits, students can explore the different archives where these images are located, and work on an assignment to share their findings, and how these images are connected to larger bodies of work. How do the significance of archives change over time?

## Archival Photographs Worksheet

**Step 1. Observing an image.** When looking at a photograph, consider who and what is in the picture. What is happening? Who is participating? Who took this photograph? What is the photographers relationship to the people being photographed?

**Step 2: Taking Notes.**

Write down your impressions of what is going on in the pictures. What do you think the point of view of the photographer was? How far away was the photographer from the scene? How do you think his/her presence may have influenced what was going on with the people in the picture, if at all? Why were these photographs taken?

**Step 3. Research**

These images can be found in both federal and state archives that are open to the public for people to learn more about the past. Research the history of the Farm Security Administration's archive that is part of the Library of Congress and the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission's photograph collection that is housed at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Why were these institutions created and what do they teach us about American history and the power of documentation?

# LESSON FOUR

## READING AND LISTENING TO A LIFE HISTORY

**Overview:** One of the most important skills needed to conduct an oral history is active listening. This lesson teaches students how to do a close listening of a conversation using an excerpt from *Talk That Music Talk* between Doratha Smith Simmons, civil rights activist, and her younger brother, Will Smith. Students will be provided with an excerpt that they can underline. In groups of three, they will read the stories out loud, focusing on remembering what they have read and heard. After doing a critical reading, they will work together to answer questions, and then refer back to the text to check their answers. In the process, they will learn how well they were able to listen for the details that were important to the storytellers.



Doratha "Dodie" Smith Simmons and her brother Will Smith in New Orleans. Photographs by Bruce Sunpie Barnes.

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Learn about the participation of Doratha Smith Simmons in the Civil Rights Movement in Louisiana and Mississippi.
- Demonstrate reading comprehension through a close response to the life history
- Develop active listening skills that is important for life history work and ethnographic research.

### TIME REQUIRED

One-two class periods between thirty minutes to one hour each.

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- Handout of Edited Simmons/Smith interview
- Handout of Questions

## SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

**STEP 1:** Lead a classroom discussion on listening. What do you have to do to be a “good” listener?

- In music, listening to sounds, like notes in a song and or beats in a rhythm, and recognizing them when you hear them again, and/or being able to play them back yourself.
- Listening to a story and understanding what the storyteller thinks is important, and communicating this information back by building on the conversation, asking follow-up questions, adjusting actions, and/or writing it down accurately.

**STEP 2:** Active listening is an important part of being a good community organizer and ethnographer. Ask students to consider times when they felt “heard” and times when they didn’t. It could have been with a parent, a friend, a teacher, or coach, to name just a few.

Define “active listening”:

- Being fully present while another person is talking (i.e. not checking your phone or staring off into space).
- Following along and understanding what that person is saying.
- Asking questions if there is any confusion, and being able to share what that person has to say in a way that rings true to them.

**STEP 3:** Students should break out into groups of three, and receive an excerpt from Dodie and Will’s chapter to read.

**STEP 5:** In their groups, each person will take on one of the narrative voices of Bruce, Dodie, or Will, and take turns reading their parts out loud to one another, making sure that they are paying attention to what is being said.

**STEP 6:** After the students complete the reading, ask them to put it aside while they answer the questions about what they have read as a group. After they have completed all the answers, they can return to the excerpt to find the

direct answers from the narrators of the stories. Students will highlight these answers as a way of helping them return to the direct responses of the storyteller.

**STEP 7:** After the groups have highlighted the answers, ask them to discuss if there were things that they did not remember or departed from what the storytellers said. They can then prepare a reflection of the experience to share with the entire class.

**STEP 8:** Lead a classroom discussion about what they learned about Dodie’s experiences in the Civil Rights movement, what they learned about active listening, and what this might tell them about how history is remembered.

## READING AND LISTENING TO A LIFE HISTORY

**Directions:** Below is an excerpt from Doratha “Dodie” Smith Simmons chapter in *Talk That Music Talk*. In groups of three, read the excerpt out loud, with each person taking on the “voice” of Bruce, Doratha or Will. Practice active listening by paying attention to what you are reading and/or hearing



Doratha “Dodie” Smith Simmons picketing segregated businesses in New Orleans.

### Introduction by Bruce Sunpie Barnes

*Almost every Saturday, a prominent CORE activist, Doratha “Dodie” Smith Simmons, would come to the [Music for All Ages] program with her husband, trumpeter John “Kid” Simmons, to listen to the kids perform. They would sit towards the back, and when they knew where they could make a suggestion, Dodie would write some songs out on a piece of paper and whisper, “Here are some tunes they might want to play.” John was even more hands-on. He played at the Park Service on a regular basis, and if he had a concert, he’d invite the kids to come and let them sit in. Dodie’s youngest brother, William Smith, was a member of the Treme and the Storyville Stompers Brass Bands, so the kids were also getting to know him as a teacher.*

*I know they were aware that Dodie, John, and Will were related and had a special relationship to the music, but I’m not sure if they ever realized how. Dodie had been the secretary of the New Orleans CORE before committing herself to traditional jazz music by working for years with Preservation Hall and the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. What I always saw in Dodie was*

*someone who was not rigidly dogmatic but held a deep belief that people should have the right to choose their own lives — to have their own pursuit of happiness. That’s what the struggle should afford you, and she passed it on to her younger brother in music and life. Will grew up playing at Preservation Hall and with the Fairview Baptist Church Band, and has played with the Lil Rascals Brass Band, Treme Brass Band, the Storyville Stompers, and the PresHall Brass Band. Dodie taught him about being a full, actualized human being and not having to worry about other people’s thought processes. Her family’s support for the program hopefully taught the kids something similar.*

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**Will:** One of my main ways of remembering Dodie as a kid is sitting somewhere with a book. She’s a very well-read woman. She may not act like it all the time when you see her on the street second lining like she’s trying to sweat, but she has always been. I think that’s where she gained motivation to get involved in that whole Civil Rights Movement.

**Dodie:** In the middle of the winter we fasted outside of St. Augustine High School on London Avenue. We were allowed to bring one blanket or quilt. We had our overcoats and gloves, and we spent the night outside in the cold. We didn’t talk. We just sat there. That’s how we learned how to become disciplined...

We went on a testing campaign. We had testers and observers. At the Greyhound Bus Station in McComb, the testers were myself, Alice Thompson, George Raymond, and Thomas Valentine. And Jerome [Smith] was the observer. He went to the ticket counter, and didn’t look at us. The four of us went in and sat at the lunch counter. George Raymond said, “May I have a cup of coffee please?”



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A young white guy filled a cup of coffee, walked behind him, poured the coffee all over his head, and hit the base of his neck with his cup. At that time, Jerome signaled Alice and me to come to the waiting room, and that’s how other people in the station connected Jerome to us. This guy started beating him with brass knuckles yelling, “I’m going to kill him! I’m going to kill him!” Some other guys jumped in and were beating him, too.

There was a glass partition around the lunch counter. Other white folks came around chasing George, and he jumped over the glass partition, and ran around the counter. It looked like a scene out of *The Three Stooges*. They’d run after him and he’d jump over the counter again. Thomas Valentine was a little slight guy. They picked him up off the stool, threw him on the ground, and he was up again right away. They grabbed him threw him down again. Up again.

On campaigns, I’d always take a note pad, and I began writing. *George is jumping over the counter being chased. Alice and I can only sit here and watch the guys get beaten.* As I’m writing all these notes, I sang in my head: *We are not afraid. We are not afraid...*

That kept me sane.

When we finally got out of the station, I said, “Oh my God, what am I going to do?” I looked back and saw Tom being kicked as he tried to get in a cab. I didn’t know what was happening to George and Alice. I ran around the side of the Greyhound Station to the Colored Entrance, and those black folks just encircled me. I stood amongst them just trembling like a leaf in the wind. I said to myself “You are going to calm yourself down, you are going to walk out of this crowd, and walk up the hill like you are going to clean Ms. Ann’s kitchen, and when you get out of sight, you are going to run like hell.” It didn’t dawn on me that I was in a white neighborhood...where was I going to run to? An 18 and a half year old girl, never been in a situation like this before, and that’s what I did. Then I heard “Dodie!” I said to myself, “How do these white folks know my name?” I ran faster. I was thinking “They are going to have to catch me. I am not going to just stand here and let them

kill me. And they are going to do some speeding to catch me.” Those heels were not touching the ground. I was flying. I think of this song that we sing:

*If they ask you tell them I’ve gone.*

*Tell them I’ve gone.*

*If they ask you, tell them I was flying, boy.*

Then I heard my name again. The adrenaline had kicked in and I ran even faster until the truck passed me up and I saw it was Jerome.

**Will:** I used to think Dodie had no fear. After McComb, she kept going. I think she saw Civil Rights as her way out. Like people she saw had to get out of rural Mississippi, and she saw it as her way of the Ninth Ward. Because the Ninth Ward actually wasn’t just a place. This is where they belonged.

**Dodie:** The first time I went to jail, three white Freedom Riders had gone to a black family’s home for dinner. The police dragged them out of the house and beat them. We did a protest. We had a sit-in at Orleans Parish Prison at Tulane and Broad. We were singing, and the police came out and said, “Stop the singing. You are disturbing the communication center.” We sang louder “Ain’t going to let no police man turn us ‘round, turn us ‘round, turn us...”

The police came back and said, “I told y’all, stop the singing, you are interfering with the communication center.” We sang louder. They brought the police dogs, and we started to sing:

*Ain’t going to let no police dogs turn us round.*

They brought the dogs closer. *Turn us round, turn us-closer-round. Ain’t going to let no police dogs turn us round.* They brought them as close as they could without the dogs biting us, and when they saw they weren’t going to deter us, they arrested us. They put the nine females in a cell for two so we sang all night because we had nowhere to sit, nowhere to sleep. Then Oretha Castle, who we didn’t know was pregnant at the time, got out, went home, and had a son! He was almost born at Tulane and Broad.

## QUESTIONS

**Directions:** Answer each question without referring back to Dodie and Will's interview. After you have responded, as a group, go back to the text and highlight the passages that support your answers. If you have gotten answers wrong, change them.

1. Dodie was active with what Civil Rights organization?
2. What kind of musician is John Simmons?
3. What leadership position in Civil Rights did Dodie hold?
4. What right did Dodie feel all people should have?
5. Where did CORE have its meetings?
6. What were new members required to learn?
7. Why were the young activists required to fast in the cold with only one blanket, coats, and gloves?
8. What town did they go to in order to be tested?
9. What did George Raymond say at the lunch counter?
10. How did a white man respond to George's request?
11. In what way did the white man assault George?
12. How did Dodie fight her fear?
13. How did the black people protect Dodie?
14. According to Will, what did Dodie feel she needed to get out of?
15. Besides being a place, what also was the Ninth Ward?
16. What race were the three Freedom Riders beaten by the police?
17. Where was the prison?
18. What did the police bring out at the protest to intimidate the protesters?
19. What did the police do when they saw the protesters would not be intimidated?
20. QUESTION TO SHARE WITH THE CLASS: What did you learn from comparing the answers you wrote down to the direct responses from the storytellers? How well do you think you listened? Did people in the group have different recollections? What did you remember more—the parts you read or the parts you listened to? What does this make you think about the way that history is remembered? What do you want to remember about CORE?



## READING AND LISTENING A LIFE HISTORY

Below is a highlighted key to help with grading the assignment.



Doratha "Dodie" Smith Simmons encouraging a boycott of segregated businesses in New Orleans.

### Introduction by Bruce Barnes

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# LESSON FIVE

## IN SEARCH OF HARMONY

### Photography as A Window Into Cross-Cultural Relationships

**Overview:** In *Talk That Music Talk*, Anthony Bennett explains he encourages young people to get involved in music because, “it affects the way you live, and the way that you deal with people. To say it simply, it creates a harmony in you. This peace. It comes in colors.” This lesson will look at how music brought people together in New Orleans by doing a photographic analysis, and then linking the images back to the story lines in the book. The images come from over 100 years of playing music in New Orleans, spanning from the days of segregation, through the Civil Rights Movement, and into the new millennium.



Wesley Schmidt, in the Storyville Stompers hat, stands in front of his mentor, “King” Richard Matthews at the funeral for the leader of the Olympia Brass Band, Harold Dejan. After years of following King Richard, Wesley has become a well-known grand marshal of parades in his own right. Photograph by Bruce Sunpie Barnes.

#### LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn to critically analyze candid photography.
- Students will look at historical data (photographs) to see that integration is not a one directional movement in society.
- Students will analyze how musical opportunities created opportunities for cross-cultural connections and consider whether it happens in their own lives.

#### TIME REQUIRED

One-two class periods between 30 minutes to one hour each.

#### MATERIALS NEEDED

- *Talk That Music Talk*
- National Archives’ photo analysis template

## SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

**STEP 1:** Pass out copies of the photographs from the book, and a list of questions for students to fill out.

**STEP 2:** Students will break into small groups to work on one particular photograph. They will spend five minutes writing down what they think is going on in the picture, and will share their thoughts with the other group members.

**STEP 3:** Students will then return to the chapters in *Talk That Music Talk* where the photographs are located. The page numbers are located under the images. Together, they will read the stories that accompany the photograph to learn more about what was going on in the image. Afterwards, they will work through the questions on the hand out to prepare to present to the class.

**STEP 4:** The order of presentations can be determined by the date of the image. The group that has the oldest image should go first. Everyone in the group should go to the front of the class to do the presentation and everyone in the group should present at least one answer. Below are notes on the images that can support their answers and lead to further discussions:

**Page 54: *A spasm band in the French Quarter, New Orleans, by Dan Leyrer, courtesy of the Hogan Jazz Archive. Circa 1910.*** This image accompanies an interview with the legendary jazz musician Danny Barker. In this chapter, he remembers his own youth band, the Boozan Kings. The group had a following in the French Quarter, which, at the time, was an integrated, working class neighborhood. The photograph provides early evidence of young people organizing themselves around music, which, according to Barker, was more popular than baseball as a pastime in his youth.

**Page 83: *Dodie Smith Simmons and her husband John “Kid” Simmons in front of Preservation Hall, courtesy of Simmons. Circa 1967.*** In their chapter, Dodie and her brother Will tell the story of Kid Simmons coming to New Orleans from England to learn New Orleans-style jazz and encountering the racism of the United States. Will and Dodie explain how at the time when Preservation Hall was one of the few integrated public establishments, their family had to learn to deal with the backlash

against Dodie’s relationship with Kid.

**Page 168: *Trumpeter Kenneth Terry as a Mardi Gras Indian with the Yellow Pocahontas in the Seventh Ward, New Orleans, courtesy of Anthony “Meathead” Hingle. Circa late 1970s.*** In Kenneth Terry’s chapter, he describes his involvement in the Yellow Pocahontas and how the Mardi Gras Indian tribe was connected to the civil rights organization, Tambourine and Fan. He said, “We were kids. We were having fun. It was more serious than we really thought. It was about our culture, and giving appreciation to the Indians for hiding the slaves through slavery time.”

**Page 41: *Young girls getting ready for a Tambourine and Fan parade dressed in tignons, the head wrap that free women of color in New Orleans were mandated to wear by the Spanish colonial government, and then turned into their own fashion statements, before a parade. Photograph courtesy of Jerome Smith. Circa late 1970s.*** The photograph is from the section of Fred Johnson’s chapter about his involvement in starting Super Sunday, Tambourine and Fan’s parade dedicated to social justice and cultural arts. In it, he explains how he learned to organize a parade, and what makes one successful. Like many African American traditions, the call and response is important. In this photograph there is a call back to history. Why were the young girls wearing it?

**Page 199: *Grand marshals Wesley Schmidt (front) and King Richard Matthews (back) at the leader of the Olympia Brass Band, Harold Dejan’s, funeral. Photograph by Bruce Sunpie Barnes. 2002.*** In Wesley’s interview about beginning a brass band with a group of white musicians, he says he learned who he knows about second lines and jazz funerals from King Richard—the grand marshal for the Olympia Brass Band. At first, he felt out of his league: “I would be like ‘Okay, Richard, go away. I don’t want you to see this.’ But over time, he realized that many bands like the Dirty Dozen got their start from learning as they went, and, “that thing I was so embarrassed about was probably the most genuine thing I’ve ever done in my life.” In this photograph, they are grand marshaling together.

**Page 69:** *First year of the Black Men of Labor Social Aid and Pleasure Club's annual second line parade, by Eric Waters, courtesy of the BMOL archive. 1994.*

This photograph is part of the history of the organization, which traces its roots back to the Yellow Pocahontas, Tambourine and Fan, and Danny Barker's jazz funeral. The organization is an all male, African American club that began on Labor Day to combat the stereotypes of Black men. Fred Johnson says in the chapter, "[B]lack men always get a bad rap about how they don't care of their business or their house...[but] that's not true for most of us." The club also honored the African roots of parading traditions in New Orleans by their choice of fabric, which is also on the cover of the book and at the beginning of each chapter.

**Page 2:** *The New Orleans Young Traditional Brass Band at the beginning of the Black Men of Labor parade at Sweet Lorraine's Jazz Club, Seventh Ward, New Orleans. Photograph by Eric Waters circa 2008.*

The New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park's Music for All Ages Program started this band under the direction of interpretive park ranger Bruce Sunpie Barnes. The program was open to all young people who were interested in learning to play traditional brass band music by sitting in with professional musicians. Each year, their own band played at the Black Men of Labor Social Aid and Pleasure Club's second line parade. They joined a long legacy of young people taking to the streets of the city. The diversity of the young people is a testament to the Park Service's mission to be open to the general public. After generations of preventing integration, the federal government is now mandated not to discriminate.

**Page 135:** *Dancing to the Treme Brass Band at the Candle Light Lounge in Treme, New Orleans, by Bruce Sunpie Barnes. 2012.* One of the bartenders at the Candlelight dances with a customer on a Wednesday night. The photograph complements a conversation that Anthony Bennett, a musician from the Tremé, has with one of his students' mother about visiting the local bar. Pat Besselman, a white woman who raised her family in the suburbs, said she would never have thought it safe to go to a predominantly black bar before getting involved with music, but she is glad she got to know it.

**Page 284:** *Doyle Cooper and Mark Smith playing a dirge for Julius Lewis' jazz funeral. Photograph by Rachel Breunlin. 2012.* The images from this chapter are

woven through an edited transcript of Julius' funeral. On the following pages, the pastor talks about Julius' commitment to teaching music and calls out Doyle for being one of his students. In his eulogy, you can tell the pastor is a bit surprised ("a brother from another mother") but proud of the connection between the two musicians. Doyle graduated from college with a degree in music education, and continues to work with young people and runs his own band, the Red Hot Brass Band.



## IN SEARCH OF HARMONY: PHOTO ANALYSIS

**Directions:** On your own, take two minutes to write your response to the image that you were assigned. What comes to mind when you look at this image? Who is present in the picture and what are they doing? Afterwards, share your responses in your small group, then find the chapter in *Talk That Music Talk* where the image is located (the page number is below the picture) and read the stories as a group to learn more about what is going on in the picture. The Group Presentation Worksheet will help you prepare for presenting your findings to the class.



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Page 199

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Page 284 (Story in Julius' Eulogy, pages-286-287)



Page 2



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## GROUP PRESENTATION

**Directions:** Complete the following questions to prepare for your group presentation. Each person in the group will have to share at least one answer.

1. Before reading the story, what were the group members' reactions to the photograph?
2. Whose chapter is the photograph in? Who gave permission to use the picture to the book project, and what time period was it taken?
3. Who is in the photograph and where is it taken?
4. Are there people who are not in the photograph, but are important to the story the photograph helps to tell? If so, who are they, and why is this person significant?
5. How did music bring the people in the image together? How did their lives change by playing or participating in listening to music?
6. How did music help further the work of integration?
7. What was your favorite part of the story and how does it make you look at the picture now?
8. What do you want your classmates to see? What does it remind you of? [*Turn over for more room if needed.*]



# LESSON SIX

## THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUE

### Developing A Life History Interview

**Overview:** When you take the time to sit down and learn from someone who is of a different age with different experiences, the teaching and the learning experiences go both ways. For this lesson, students will read Ray Lambert's chapter where he discusses growing up before and after segregation with a young musician named Xavier Michel. After reading the chapter, students will have the opportunity to conduct an interview of their own and reflect on what they learned from an intergenerational dialogue.



Ray Lambert (*left*) and Xavier Michel (*right*) talking about music, race, and culture in New Orleans in 2012.

#### LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn how to prepare for and conduct a semi-structured, in-depth life history interview.

**TIME REQUIRED:** A week or longer if time permits.

#### MATERIALS NEEDED

- Ray Lambert's chapter in *Talk That Music Talk*
- Hand-out on how to interview
- Interview schedule students create themselves
- Permission form
- Audio recorder (Can be found on most smart phones)

## SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

**STEP 1:** Have students read Ray Lambert’s chapter in *Talk That Music Talk* and ask them to write down questions that an interviewer would have had to have asked for Ray to tell the stories he shared.

### **STEP 2: Doing your own oral history**

After students have written down questions, they are ready to begin thinking about someone who they would like to interview. Students should choose someone who grew up during segregation. The person could have been involved in Civil Rights activism, played music, or just experienced day-to-day life under the unequal system. They can be of any “racial” background. The point of the interview will be to ask about their experiences growing up during segregation and what their experiences with music were like. Did it help them cross any racial boundaries in their lives? Use of the oral history hand out to walk students through how to set up their interview. Explain that a good interview for this project will last somewhere between a half an hour to an hour.

### **STEP 4: Classroom Follow-Up to Interview**

Depending on how much time you have, students can write a reflection about what the interview was like, or you can do a story-circle where they talk about what worked and what didn’t. Students enjoy sharing what they learned.

### **STEP 6: Writing Up**

The amount of time the class will devote to writing up the interview depends on the goals of the teacher and the coursework. Projects range from:

- Short reflection pieces where they can write about what it was like to do the interview, what they learned about, and what it made them think about in their own lives.
- Students can write a life history of the person using a transcript of the interview to pull quotes and details from the interview.
- Students can type out the full transcript of the interview and then edit it into a story or conversation.
- Students should share their write-up with the person they interviewed to make sure they got everything right before turning it in, and to respect the relationship.

### **STEP 7: Building Community**

A wonderful way to build community in the classroom is to host an event where students invite the people they interviewed to come and receive a copy of their interview project. Students can talk about what they learned, give the interviewees an opportunity to speak about their experiences, and share a copy of their final write-up with them. The event also gives everyone a chance to meet and get to know each other on a deeper level, which is an important part of bridging divides between school and home communities.

## HOW TO DO AN ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

For this project, you will build on what you have learned in *Talk That Music Talk* to do an interview with someone who lived under the segregation laws known as Jim Crow. To do this project, you will learn how to do an in-depth interview to learn what was it like for someone to live with these rules in place. You can choose to interview someone of any background because everyone was impacted by the laws. In the interview, you can learn about how did people of different “races” did or did not connect with one another during this time, and what were the impacts of people living apart. You can ask them what role music played in their lives and whether it was a way they could connect across boundaries.

Learning to be a good interviewer means learning a lot about ourselves and how we communicate with others. We need to pay attention to what our assumptions are going into a research project so that they won’t get in the way of 1) How we work with people on their stories and 2) What we ultimately learn and are able to share with others.

**STEP 1:** Read Ray Lambert’s chapter in *Talk That Music Talk* and write down questions that an interviewer would have had to have asked for Ray to tell the stories he shared. Imagine what it was like for the two childhood friends to pass each other on the street, but to be living separate lives. What would you like to ask each of them.

### STEP 2: Doing your own oral history

After you have written down questions, you are ready to begin thinking about someone you would like to interview. Choose someone to interview who grew up during segregation. The person could have been involved in Civil Rights activism, someone who played music, or just experienced day-to-day life under the unequal system. They can be of any “racial” background. The point of the interview will be to ask about their experiences growing up during segregation and what their experiences with music were like. Did it help them cross any racial boundaries in their lives?

Once you know who you’d like to interview, do a five minute “free-write” on this person and why they are important. When you are finished, you can share your reflection with your classmates.

- As you prepare for your interview, keep an open mind. Someone is opening his/her life to you. It is a gift that can be very transformative for both of you. Here are three reasons why:

- 1) Interviews provide a space to talk about experiences, relationships, and feelings that you may not talk about in everyday life.

- 2) Listening to other people’s stories helps you think and remember more about your own life.

- 3) Reflecting on other people’s experiences helps you decide what’s important to you as you grow up.

### STEP 3: Organizing an interview schedule

Now write down other questions you would like to ask the person you are interviewing. You should have at least 20 questions.

- After you have a list of questions, you need to organize them in ways that will make an interview flow smoothly. For first time interviews, it is best to keep the questions in chronological order so you don’t get confused about when events happened. Topics should not jump all over the place, either.

- Begin with questions that will make the person being interviewed feel comfortable with the interview—they may be a little nervous and you might be too!

- Stay away from questions that will be answered in just a few words—especially “yes” and “no” questions. Instead, use words that begin with question words like “How,” “What,” “Where” and “When” to help people tell a longer story.

- Questions should begin with easy answers and can build up to harder questions. Do not end the interview on a difficult question, which will make the interviewee feel like they’ve been “left hanging.” Instead, give them an opportunity to reflect on their experiences and what they want the interviewee to know about them.

**STEP 4: How to conduct an interview**

When you first begin doing interviews, you may feel shy and nervous. Even if you are doing the interview in your own house, an interview will turn a familiar place into a formal setting! If you decide to record your interview, you will need to do two things before the interview begins:

- **Permission form.** If the teacher or school intends to use the interview for anything besides the classroom project, the interviewee will need to sign a permission form before the interview begins. This form includes the full name of both the interviewee and the interviewer, contact information, signature, and date.
- **Before the interview begins,** ask students to do a “tag line” at the beginning of the recording. A standard one: “This is NAME and today is DAY MONTH, YEAR, and I’m sitting WHERE with WHO about to do an interview for NAME OF CLASS PROJECT. NAME, do I have your permission to begin the interview?”

Here are some tips on being a good interviewer:

- **During an interview,** you need to find a quiet place without distractions. All phones and TVs are off. If you are recording, do not have background music on.
- **Throughout the interview,** you must work at making good eye contact, or showing respect in other ways that are appropriate. Do not act bored! Even if you are interested, you need to work at showing the person you interview that you care. Write out your questions ahead of time and bring extra paper to take good notes on the answers.
- **Don’t judge or correct people.** Don’t tell anyone they’re wrong or show disapproval.
- **Active Listening.** Ask follow-up questions!!! If they talk about something that you can tell is important to them, don’t just jump to the next question!
- **Take notes on things you want to follow-up on—other questions.**
- **Don’t dominate the interview by talking about yourself.**

- **Offer comfort** if your interviewee becomes upset, and ask if they would like to take a break.

- **At the end of the interview,** say thank-you and explain again how you are going to use the interview. Ask if you can follow-up with them if they have any more questions.

**Note:** Listening to these suggestions is a bit like someone explaining how to do a dance or play a song. Instructions make much more sense when you actually start to do it, so don’t forget to come back to these tips. You will become an even better interviewer moving forward!

**WRITTEN RELEASE FORM**

Name of Interviewer (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name of Person Interviewed (print)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Interview \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand the photographs are part of research being conducted by \_\_\_\_\_. I give permission for my image to be used for publications associated with the \_\_\_\_\_, including but not limited to books, newsletters, exhibits, and radio documentaries. I understand that the photographs may be kept as part of an archive, which may be used in future publications and projects approved by \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ May include my name

\_\_\_\_\_ May NOT include my name

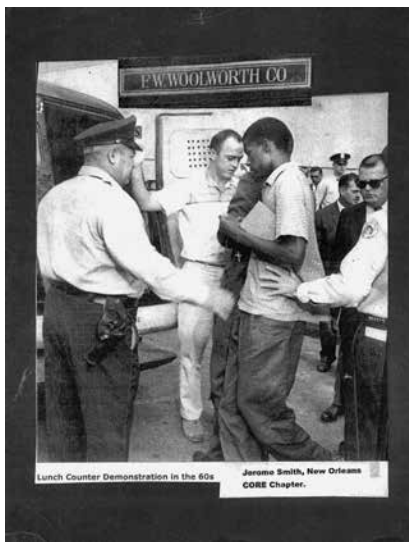
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Interviewee\_\_\_\_\_  
Date\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Guardian if  
Interviewee is under 18\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# LESSON SEVEN

## BECOMING A CULTURAL INVESTOR

### Individual and Group Projects

**Overview:** In this unit, students will move beyond the days of the classic Civil Rights Movement and into contemporary times. Reading Jerome Smith's chapter in *Talk That Music Talk*, they will learn how Civil Rights and music were combined together in a youth organization in New Orleans called Tambourine and Fan. Using the concept of a "cultural investment," students will then create a presentation about their own community. The lesson also encourages the class to create their own social justice event or "moving classroom."



Lunch Counter Demonstration in the 60s

Jerome Smith, New Orleans  
CORE Chapter.



*Left:* Curriculum for Tambourine and Fan shows a picture of Jerome Smith being arrested after a sit-in at Woolworth's. Photograph courtesy of Tambourine and Fan. *Right:* Jerome Smith standing in front of Craig Elementary School holding a picture of himself playing with young people in the Music for All Ages program at Lionel Batiste Senior's jazz funeral. Photograph by Bruce Sunpie Barnes.

#### LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Understand the concept of "cultural investor."
- Discover how Jerome Smith acted as a cultural investor to aid in the enrichment of social life in New Orleans.
- Discover how they as residents of their own communities can engage in civic participation by becoming cultural investors.
- Devise a plan for acting as a cultural investor in their own community.

#### TIME REQUIRED

This lesson could be structured over a few days, or, if time permits, a number of weeks.

#### MATERIALS NEEDED

- Jerome Smith's chapter in *Talk That Music Talk*
- Pen and paper for free-writing
- Handout on Cultural Investment
- Optional audio-visual equipment for presentations
- Materials for creative projects can be procured by students or, if doing a classroom project, provided by the school.

## SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Jerome Smith is a life-long resident of New Orleans and a cultural investor in his community. Using the organizing techniques he learned in the Civil Rights Movement, he co-founded Tambourine and Fan, a youth organization that created events that brought young people together to create cultural experiences that enriched the life of the city. In *Talk That Music Talk*, he explains, “I wanted to create an organization out of children’s play and Civil Rights—use their fun time for social awareness and historical linkages, especially to the music. I wanted the organization to electrify their senses—electrify their spirits.”

Since the 1970s, Tambourine and Fan has run after school programs and summer camps in the downtown neighborhoods of New Orleans. One of the strong messages that came out of Tambourine and Fan was the importance of self-documentation—to get to know one’s own history and how it is connected to global struggles, and be able to tell these stories as a form of empowerment. For many years, they organized a parade, or “moving classroom,” called Super Sunday which honored important experiences in African American history, ranging from dance circles in Congo Square, where enslaved Africans met on Sundays before emancipation, to the stories of fallen civil rights leaders around the South. Tambourine and Fan mentored young musicians in the traditions of New Orleans street performances like brass bands and social aid and pleasure clubs. They also invited Mardi Gras Indian tribes, (who create elaborate beaded suits in honor of Native Americans who helped runaway slaves) and the Northside Skull and Bone Gang (who dress as skeletons on Carnival day to send social messages to their community to embrace the fullness of life and honor ancestors) to join the procession. This cross-generational parade helped young people to make connections to a long tradition of resistance and art in the city.

**STEP 1:** If students have not read Jerome Smith’s chapter in *Talk That Music Talk*, they can take turns reading out loud to each other to cultivate a culture of storytelling and active listening. Going around the room, each student can read one paragraph. If they have already read the chapter, begin the lesson by reviewing Bruce Barnes’ introduction to the chapter and the first section, “Where You Hear Music”

**STEP 2:** Ask students to “free-write” on the topic, “How do people come together in your community?” for ten minutes.

**STEP 3:** Ask students to read their responses and facilitate a conversation about similarities and differences between Jerome’s generation and their own.

**STEP 4:** Pass out the handout, “Being a Cultural Investor.” Students can complete it as a brainstorming session during class, or it can be given to them as a more in-depth homework assignment.

**STEP 5:** If time permits, students can share their ideas with the class. Afterwards, they will be given a week or more to work on a presentation about an important cultural practice in their community. As part of their pre-

sentation, they should explain why is it important, and how it brings people together. Do participants consider it to be a form of “social justice?” Are there possibilities for connecting it to social concerns like Jerome Smith and Rudy Lombard did with Tambourine and Fan? If so, what issue would they like to address?

**STEP 6:** If the format of the course allows for a more in-depth project, the class would then work on organizing an event at an important place in the community or create a “moving classroom,” which could take their presentations on cultural practices and social justice into the streets. Depending on how much time is available, either option is an excellent way to learn about the art of community organizing. For instance:

- Students can work together to develop a social justice theme they want to highlight.
- If they decide to concentrate on a place or an event, students can create a program open to the public.
- If they decide to create a “moving classroom,” students can read other chapters in *Talk That Music Talk*, particularly the Black Men of Labor section, to learn more about how parades are put together in New Orleans. They can then





**Left:** Benny Jones, Sr. dressed up for the Black Men of Labor parade with matching umbrella and fan. Photograph by Eric Waters.  
**Top right:** A sign created for a youth brass band for the Bucket Men parade. **Bottom right:** A banner for the Black Men of Labor's annual second line parade. Photographs by Eric Waters.

consider what would represent their own communities the best.

- Students can invite people who are involved in cultural practices in their community if they would like to participate.
- Students can organize the school band or other students in the class/school to provide music for the parade.
- Students can work in small groups to create the “regalia” for the parade. Matching clothes, fans, banners, sashes, and signs are all ways people show togetherness in a parade.
- Students can work with the school administration to create a route for their moving classroom, and to secure necessary paperwork to have a fieldtrip.
- Students can create a “route sheet” and develop other forms of advertisement in local and social media for their event. They can help promote it in the school and around their community.
- Students can organize themselves into different parts of

the parade to decide who is going to be responsible for the different components that go into a successful parade.

- Students can document the event and share it as another way to raise awareness about their social justice issue(s).

**STEP 6:** After the event is over, ask students to reflect on what they learned by doing another free-write. They can share these reflections with the entire class. What was successful? What would they do differently the next time.

**STEP 7:** Students can also write thank-you cards to the people who helped support their event.



## BECOMING A CULTURAL INVESTOR

**Directions:** Answer the following questions on separate sheets of paper to prepare for your Cultural Investment Project.

1. How would you define the term “social justice”?
2. How would you define the term “street culture”?
3. How would “street culture” be different from other forms of culture?
4. Why did Jerome Smith use music to further social justice in New Orleans?
5. How can an event like a parade help to build connections within a community?
6. What are some ways a person can be an investor, and how would you become a “cultural investor?”
7. What other social/cultural characteristics of your community could be used to further social justice and build community connections in your community? (List at least three)
8. How do community members invest in them, and what are the benefits?
9. What people, places, and events are important to know about in trying to understand social justice struggles in your community?
9. What social justice issues would you want to highlight from your own community?
10. Choose one and brainstorm ways that you can create a presentation for the class about it.

## BECOMING A CULTURAL INVESTOR

Below are general guidelines for answering the first half of the questions. There are, of course, many other possibilities.

1. How would you define the term “social justice”?

*Social justice speaks to pursuit of the right of individuals and groups to be afforded the same opportunities and privileges in a society regardless of their background.*

2. How would you define the term “street culture”?

*Forms of art and expression that spring from home communities rather than professional or academic areas, and are presented in the public sphere.*

3. How would “street culture” be different from other forms of culture?

*There is not a strong boundary between the organizers and the participants. In many cases, the goal is to invite the audience to join in the celebration, and strong support is a sign of success.*

4. Why would music be a way for Jerome Smith to try to further “social justice” in New Orleans?

*Music in the streets of New Orleans was a way to organize and bring joy to the people who participate and those that have a chance to listen as the parade moves through the city. Many organizations use parades a way to honor community members and important neighborhood institutions. Because New Orleanians are endeared to this form of “community organizing,” it was a good vehicle to use to incorporate other messages.*

5. How can an event like a parade help to build connections within a community?

*Parades like second lines require club members to work together to put on the parade, but then they must also advertise the event and invite the broader community to come out to participate in it. Young people in Tambourine and Fan worked to make the flags, signs, and regalia that were carried during the parade to share social justice messages.*

6. What are some ways a person can be an investor, and how would you become a “cultural investor?”

*An investor is someone who contributes to their community and hopes that their efforts, whether they are financial contributions or the giving of time and other resources, will help the community grow in positive ways. Cultural investment is when you recognize cultural practices that are important to your community, and work to cultivate them.*

7. What are some cultural practices that are important in your community?

*To name just a few: community radio and museums, altars for All Saints Day and St. Joseph’s Night, Mardi Gras costumes, graffiti, dances, poetry nights, barbershops and beauty salons, sculpture, sports, architecture, landscaping/gardening, cooking, games such as chess, dominoes, and pitty-pat, and double-dutch, spoken word such as rap and poetry nights, art galleries, bookstores, festivals.*

# HEY LA BAS!

## CELEBRATING THE CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE FIRST ROAD IN NEW ORLEANS

### & Raising Awareness About the History of E.B. Kruttschnitt Park



Photographs by Bruce Sunpie Barnes.

After studying the history of Bayou Road in New Orleans, and a small park on the street dedicated to white supremacist E.B. Kruttschnitt, students in Rachel Breunlin and Bruce Barnes' Public Culture course at the University of New Orleans created an anti-racist event in 2013. Located at the park, the event highlighted the multi-cultural history of the area through an interactive altar to raise awareness about the problematic naming of a public spaces after one of the architects of Jim Crow. They invited community residents, cultural organizations, and business owners to participate in the event.



## BACKSTREET CULTURAL MUSEUM BENEIFT AND ALTAR



*Top left:* Inside the Backstreet Cultural Museum. Photograph by Bruce Sunpie Barnes. *Top right:* A memory box and poem created by Lauren Franklin for the Public Culture course. *Bottom:* Sylvester Francis and the class with their altar honoring the museum.

After reading *Talk That Music Talk*, students in Rachel Breunlin and Bruce Barnes' Public Culture course at the University of New Orleans visited the Backstreet Cultural Museum in Tremé to learn about street performances and have an opportunity to see the material culture that is documented in the book. Afterwards, they created an altar installation at a benefit for the museum to highlight different aspects of the displays, as well as photographs from the book, and their own creative projects.