

## Summer Institute 2024: Cross-Cultural Perspectives Along the Silk Road

Partnership with the British Library

### Lesson Plan Template

Please include the following sections in your lesson plans in the order printed. The standard format will help support the placement on the website to be shared with other teachers interested in the topic. This format may be used for unit design as well as a specific lesson. The preliminary lesson will be presented to peers at the end of our trip in July. The final plans are due by August 5, 2024, and may be submitted to Karen Williams, SMCOE, by August 5, 2024. The lesson plan will be uploaded to the Tang Center for Silk Road Studies website:  
<https://ieas.berkeley.edu/centers/tang-center-silk-road-studies-tcsrs/k-12-connections/k-12-connections-lesson-plans>

#### Name, School, Grade Level

Kate Roseman, Borel Middle School, Grades 6-8, Choir

#### Title of Unit/Lesson

Musical Time Travel: An Exploration of Traditional Music from the Tang Dynasty and How it Relates to Contemporary Choral Music

#### Organizing/Essential/Guiding Questions

- 1) How does music from the past inform or relate to contemporary music?
- 2) What kinds of musical instruments were used in traditional Chinese music during the Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD)?
- 3) How do students from different backgrounds, cultures, and experiences respond to music differently? In what ways are their responses similar?
- 4) “The Silk Roads” brought together musicians from different cultures, languages, and backgrounds to create music together. How is that reflected in our own classroom?

#### Introduction/Overview

In Dunhuang, there is a place called the Mogao Caves where these beautiful frescos on the wall depict Buddhist imagery. Inside one of these caves was a smaller cave that had been closed from the early 11th Century then opened in 1900 when it was rediscovered by a monk named Wang Yuanlu. It’s a mystery as to why the cave was sealed, but the rediscovered contents of the “Library Cave” as it came to be known, was a font of information about that time period. Some of the scrolls were Buddhist texts, or Sutras, some of them were travel documents, letters, drawings, pictures, and even music. Many of these scrolls were used on both sides, sometimes

with no connection between them. Some of these scrolls were rolled, some were folded, some were bound and others weren't.

Dunhuang was a special place along the **Silk Road** because the geography of the mountains and the desert made it so people traveling to China needed to pass it along the way. There were those who lived there and also those who were traveling thorough. This led to the area being a place where cultures came together, and influenced each other.

In 763 Tibet captured the Tang Capital of Chang'an and in 786, they took over Dunhuang as well. They influenced the laws, the writing system, and even the clothes at the time. Even after the end of the Tibetan control of the region, their influence in the area was still prevalent, especially because Tibetan became the lingua franca, or the common tongue, for travelers and traders to do business with one another.

One of the texts that was found in the Library Cave was a specific Buddhist text called a Lankavatara Sutra. This sutra was folded in a **concertina** style. This sutra was interesting because the text was written in Tibetan in one direction, but the commentary on the text, written in Chinese, was written in a different direction.

## Content Standards

### Grade 7

#### **7.MU:Pr4.2**

c. Identify how personal, social, cultural, and historical context inform performances and result in different musical effects.

#### **7.MU:Re7.2**

b. Identify and compare the context of music from a variety of genres, cultures, and historical periods.

### Grade 8

#### **8.MU:Pr4.2**

c. Identify how personal, social, cultural, and historical context inform performances and result in different music interpretations.

### Class

#### **Responding—Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and Analyze Artistic Work**

##### **7.2 Enduring Understanding**

Response to music is informed by analyzing context (social, cultural, and historical) and how creators and performers manipulate the elements of music.

#### **Prof.MU:C.Re7.2**

Analyze aurally the elements of music (including form) of musical works, relating them to style, mood, and context, and describe how the analysis provides models for personal growth as composer, performer, and listener.

#### **Connecting—Anchor Standard 11: Relate Artistic Ideas and Works with Societal, Cultural, and Historical Context to Deepen Understanding**

### Enduring Understanding

Musicians connect their personal interests, experiences, ideas, and knowledge to creating, performing, and responding.

### Prof.MU:H.Cn11

Connect and demonstrate the relationships between music and societal, cultural, and historical contexts when creating, performing, and responding.

### Objectives:

- Students will be introduced to the idea of the Silk Road and the exchange and spread of cultures, language, religions, ideas, goods, and of course, music
- Students will make connections between the traditional Tang Dynasty Music from China and contemporary choral music.
- Students will be introduced to the Library Caves at Dunhuang and the **Chinese-Tibetan Lankavatara Sutra**.
- Students will create a graphic organizer in the form of a **concertina**
- Students will learn about Chinese instruments both traditional and contemporary
- Students will reinforce their understanding and performance of the pentatonic scale.
- Students will listen and respond to [Ai Hai Yo](#) by Tyler Arcari.

### Materials:

- 11x17 Paper (or similar)
- Pencil
- Colored pencils (or medium of your choice)

### Resources:

- International Dunhuang Programme Website
  - [Lankāvatārasūtra in Tibetan with commentary in Chinese](#)
- Article on the [Chinese-Tibetan Lankavatara Sutra](#) (van Schaik, 2015)
- [Slide Deck: Musical Time Travel](#)

### Special Equipment:

- Art supplies.
- For the simulation, you're encouraged to use supplies that you find in your classroom.

### Teacher Preparation:

- Gather supplies for simulation. You're encouraged to use supplies that you find in your classroom.
- Familiarize yourself with the Music Time Travel slide deck

- Make a sample Concertina so students know what to expect. It'll also help you troubleshoot what students may struggle with.

## Time/Timeline

This lesson can be used to supplement student learning and making connections between the current piece of music they're singing and music during the Tang Dynasty. The example in this lesson is *Ai Hai Yo* arranged by Tyler Arcari, but teachers should choose repertoire that fits their choir, and can adapt this lesson to fit their classroom. The two activities outlined in this lesson can be combined and divided into multiple lessons, or used independently.

## Procedures:

### Activity 1: Silk Road Trade Simulation

Simulation with Post-its (25 minutes = 5 min prep, 10 min activity, 10 minute discussion)

- 1) Set up:
  - a) 3 Posters around the Room that represent three different places
  - b) On the posters are the **Starter Post-Its (all one color)**, representing the culture, resources, and languages etc. of that area.
  - c) Divide students into three groups and give them the starting stickers from that area.
  - d) Divide each of the three groups into two groups, traders and villagers.
    - i) **Villagers** will stay at their "home" and trade stickers with the traders who travel though. Villagers will add traders stickers to their home posters.
    - ii) **Traders** will travel to the other locations, and trade stickers with the villagers.
- 2) Students take 7-10 minutes to travel around and trade.
  - a) Use a musical cue from *Ai Hai Yo* to cue students to switch spots.
- 3) Students return to their "home" at the end of the activity. Discuss in groups (or divide into partners)
  - i) Discussion Questions:
    - (1) What do you notice about how your poster started versus how it ended up?
    - (2) What do you wonder about this exchange?
    - (3) What do you think the Post-Its represent in this activity?
  - ii) Write responses on your poster
  - iii) Share Out
- 4) Introduce the Silk Road and the Library Cave in Dunhuang (SLIDE DECK) (10 minutes)
  - a) Silk Road: The Silk Road is the name of the route that extended over Inner Asia from India to China. There were routes of change and trade both over land and by sea. Just like we saw with this activity, this kind of trade was not just a trade of physical items, but also of culture, languages, and even religions.
  - b) Dunhuang: One of these places along the Silk Road was a place called Dunhuang. Duhuang was an important place along the route because it's on the edge of a huge desert, a place that people had to pass though to get to China

- c) Library Cave - Manuscripts from the 11th Century were discovered in Cave 17 in Dunhuang. There were many different kinds of manuscripts written in varying languages.
  - i) Exit Ticket: What do you think scholars call this cave? (Answer for next class: Library Cave)

## Activity 2: Concertina Graphic Organizer

- 1) Introduce **Lankavatara Sutra** Or. 8210/S.5603 (photo from screen) **(5 minutes)**
  - a) Quick Write: What do you notice (2 things) What do you wonder? (1 thing)
  - b) Mini-Lesson on the Item (use the IDP Website, and Blog written by Sam van Schaik)
    - i) What's a Sutra?
      - 1) A sutra is a Buddhist religious texts that is the teachings of the Buddah. These sutras often begin with "Thus I have heard" because the sutras are written by disciples, or students of the Buddah. There are different kinds of sutras which emphasize different parts of the Buddha's teachings.
    - ii) Vertical/Scroll/Chinese and Horizontal/Pothi/Tibetan
    - iii) Question for students: What do you think it was used for? Answer: Scholars don't really know, but the blog says two different theories.
      - 1) Someone learning the language
      - 2) translator Chodrup, who lived in Dunhuang in the 9th century preparing for a new Chinese translation of the scroll
- 2) Concertina Activity
  - a) Put in partner groups
    - i) Introduce yourself to your partner. Tell them about a song you listened to this week.
  - b) Fold Paper
    - i) Make it a math problem: How can we fold this paper into 6 equal pieces? Based on the image, can you tell which direction we will be folding the paper?
  - c) Fill out the concertina (See below). Note: Combine section 2 and 3 to make a bigger section for students to do their writing and commentary.

### CONCERTINA

- 1. **Listen and Draw** - Choose a "traditional" piece of music from the Tang Dynasty.
  - a. Listen to the music and draw a scene or a story that comes to mind as your listening
    - i. Sentence Starter: When the music sounded \_\_\_\_\_ I thought of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. Move your pencil to the music to create abstract shapes and patterns. Think about how your drawing is a response to the music

- i. Sentence Starter: When the music sounded \_\_\_\_\_ I drew \_\_\_\_\_.

2. **Written Response** (Sections 2 and 3 combined) - Choose ONE color to write with.
- Write 4-5 sentences about the image you created. Think about the music you heard. What about the music made you respond that way?
  - Musical Terms to consider: Tempo, pitch, beat/rhythm, phrasing, instruments

3. **Partner Commentary** (Sections 2 and 3 combined) - Choose a different color than your partner to write with. OK to write in your “mother tongue”
- Look at your partner's image. Read what your partner wrote.
  - Underline a word or section of text you want to make a comment on and comment on their text.
  - Turn the page so your writing will appear at a different angle than your partners.
    - Ask a question “I wonder”
    - Add new information “I think”
    - Make a connection “I also thought of”

4. **Instruments** - Listen again to the piece of music but this time, let students watch as they listen.
- Before watching: What instruments did you hear while we listened?
  - After watching: What type of instrument are they?
  - Have students draw the instruments and label them.
    - Pipa
    - Dizi
    - Guixian
    - Drum

5. **La Pentatone** - The song we listened to uses this tonality. (Or you can sub-in another musical concept that relates to your classroom curriculum)
- Write a do to do solfege ladder. Sing
  - Echo sing so-mi interval. Cross out fa.
  - Echo sing la-do interval. Cross out ti.
  - Math Connection: What is a five sided shape called? A PENTAGON!
  - Sing do pentatone
  - add low la,. Sing.

6. **Listen and Draw - Ai Hai Yo** - (Or contemporary Chinese choral song that relates to your classroom curriculum)
- Listen to the music and draw a scene or a story that comes to mind as your listening
    - Sentence Starter: When the music sounded \_\_\_\_\_ I thought of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Move your pencil to the music to create abstract shapes and patterns. Think about how your drawing is a response to the music

i. Sentence Starter: When the music sounded \_\_\_\_\_ I drew  
\_\_\_\_\_.

## Assessment – Performance Standards, Rubric, Project

### **Concertina Assessment Rubric**

- 1) Each section of the concertina is filled out. Each section is (15 points)
- 2) Response is a minimum of 4 sentences, related to the music. (15 points)
- 3) Commented at least 3 sentences on partner's paper (15 points)
- 4) Back of the paper drawing (10 points)