

Module Five: Sound Track

Course

English 360: Methods of Teaching Literature 6-12 (3 credit hours)

Prerequisites: Admission to the College of Education

Approaches to teaching literature through reading, writing, and nonprint media. Stresses practical development of teaching material.

Description

Creating a sound track for a literary text

This module requires students to engage with a literary text through interpretation by providing a sound track. Each student will be asked to burn a CD, which includes at least three songs that would be appropriate for a film version of the text read. Students may choose their own scenes.

Transferability

This activity is clearly germane with language arts curriculum; it could be used in many areas of the humanities as well. Any class in which content could be imagined (or viewed) as a film or other graphic art could be enhanced through the students' interpreting through and connecting with an event/idea/work and music. Students in American history, for example, reading, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* and other accounts of the Wounded Knee Massacre might seek out the music of Joy Harjo's band Honor or other native groups to include in an imagined film of Dee Brown's book or after watching documentaries about this event. Students studying the labor movement could choose from the many songs of this period to include in a film about this movement in U.S. history. In an art class, students could choose and present music representing their interpretation of an individual work or artist. Imagining (or watching) a film about Frida Kahlo, or in response to a single work, students could research that period in Mexican history and the cultural/historical context of Kahlo's as well as Diego Rivera's work.

Faculty Technology Skills

Burning a CD (capturing music)

Faculty Equipment

- PC with Internet connection
- CD burner
- CD software

Student Equipment

- PC with Internet connection
- CD burner
- CD software (e.g., *Windows Media Player*)

Improvement on Teaching and Learning

This module requires students to interpret and then translate a work or idea. Translation into another genre or medium enhances students' learning of material by calling upon their higher level thinking skills (synthesis, application) as well as creativity. This module also incorporates the fine arts and taps into musical intelligences. It also allows students to bring their

culture—contemporary music—into the classroom, which enhances the bridging of the known to the new as well as encouraging the scholarly habit of mind of connection-making.

Nontechnology Comparison

The module requires students to learn to capture music and burn a CD. Many students will be familiar with the technology and those who are can assist others in the class. While this activity can also use audiotape technology, it is a useful initial activity to scaffold further and more complex uses of CD technology.

Pertinent Issues

- Legal and ethical issues in copying music
- The story used here presents issues of sexuality and violence

How to Use This Module in the Classroom

Directions for Students

Imagine you are teaching a unit focused on stories involving both male and female protagonists negotiating gender and addressing adolescents' emerging views of gender identity. Such a unit might include: Maxine Hong Kingston's *Memoirs of a Woman Warrior*, Toni Cade Bambara's "Gorilla, My Love," Updike's "In the A and P," Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, Jamaica Kincaid's "Girl," James Baldwin's "Sonny's Blues," Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper," Julia Alvarez's *House on Mango Street*, Theodore Roethke's "My Papa's Waltz," Marlowe's "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love," Sophocle's *Antigone*, Li-Young Lee's "The City in Which I Have Loved You," and selected nonfiction pieces. For this assignment, students will have read Joyce Carol Oates' "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?"

To demonstrate this assignment, you will choose three pieces of music to be used to accompany three different scenes in "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" Songs may be contemporary or they may be from the setting of the text (1960s in the U.S.). Bob Dylan's "It's All Over Now, Baby Blue," an inspiration for this story, would be an appropriate choice.

1. After selecting three songs illustrative of the scenes you have chosen, burn these onto a CD, following the directions of the media program (e.g., *Windows Media Player*) loaded on available computers.
2. Write a one-page rationale for each song chosen, addressing .□□
 - Metaphors, theme, symbols, mood in the scene chosen (be specific, with examples).
 - Metaphors, theme, symbols, mood in the music (be specific, with examples).
 - How the music would enhance a reader's (or viewer's) experience of the text.

Possible intergenerational involvement might include asking parents or older family members for music of other periods. To enhance intercultural and global awareness, students from non-U.S. cultures should be encouraged to use music from their native cultures.

This particular module will engage students in discussions of sexual violence, date rape, safety, and decision-making. Students will be asked to analyze and critique messages of sexuality and power in contemporary music and, logically, music videos.