

Music of the 1940's Unit Overview (3 weeks)

Objectives:

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to count and perform in cut time with increased proficiency.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to count and perform in six-eight time.
3. Students will gain a greater understanding of the politics, culture, and arts of America during World War II and the 1940s through a study of jazz, big band and military music of the era.

Strategies:

1. Students will rehearse the cut time sections of *Marches of the Armed Forces* (arr. Sweeney, 1991) and discuss a rudimentary history and origin of the theme songs for the US Army, Navy, Coast Guard, and Marines.
2. Students will be given an opportunity to do further research into the origin and composer of each theme. Students who present their findings to the class will receive extra credit.
3. Students will rehearse and discuss the six-eight time signature, giving the teacher an opportunity to evaluate their prior expertise with the objective. The teacher will then guide students through the counting of simple rhythms in six-time written on the overhead projector.
4. Students will rehearse the US Air Force theme in six-eight time, and discuss the origin of the theme.
5. Students will discuss the purpose for performing *Marches of the Armed Forces* at the school's USO show. The teacher will explain that World War II veterans as well as active duty and retired servicemen and women will be asked to stand and be honored as their theme is performed.
6. Students will perform eighth notes in swing style, and apply them to a very simple band composition, *Swing Street* (Shaeffer, 1988). Comparisons will be made between the styles used in their swing dance lessons with a guest artist and the swing style performed in *Swing Street*.
7. Students will view selected sections of movies, *The Benny Goodman Story*, and *The Glenn Miller Story*. The class will discuss the emergence of the big band jazz style, and the way World War II affected the big bands. Students in jazz band will demonstrate sections of their USO selection, *In The Mood*.