Realism in Music, The Underground Railroad

Grade Level or Special Area: Grade 5, Music, Social Studies, Language Arts
Written by: Debra Kay Robinson Lindsay
Length of Unit: Nine lessons

I. ABSTRACT

Song lyrics have often been the subject of speculation and discussion, but for slaves wishing to escape the horrors of the South before and during the Civil War, they were often the only sense of hope for those wishing to reach "The Promised Land." Come and become acquainted with the coded lyrics of Follow the Drinking Gourd, Wade in the Water, The Ballad of the Underground Railroad, Get on Board and many other songs. Come to brush up on your American history and learn how you can concurrently teach music, social studies and language arts all at the same time. This unit contains a series of lessons you will not want your students to miss. The appeal of this music will enable your students to become actively involved in this horrific era in American history. Song arrangements, activity sheets, maps and assessment materials will be provided for those who attend.

II. OVERVIEW (Concepts, content, and skills below should match those listed in each lesson.)

A. Concept Objectives
   1. The students will become familiar with several songs associated with American slaves and be able to analyze the content of the song for historical references in the lyrics, time periods, places and events.
   2. The students will develop accuracy in vocal performance.

B. Content from the Core Knowledge Sequence
   1. Music Section
      a. Originated by African-Americans, many spirituals go back to the days of slavery (page number 122)
      b. Understand elements of music (page 121)
         1. verse and refrain
         2. fast and slow and gradually changing tempi
         3. sing unaccompanied and accompanied and in unison
         4. recognize and explain introduction, interlude and coda
         5. notation recognition
         6. symbol recognition
   2. II. American History and Geography -- Civil War: Causes, Conflicts, Consequences (page 117)

C. Skill Objectives
   1. Identify note names and symbols.
   2. Sing with accuracy.
   3. Compare and contrast.
   4. Listening comprehension.
   5. Writing a response

III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

A. For Teachers
   1. Knowledge about:
      a. Harriet Tubman (1820-1913) -- an American abolitionist who was born a slave on a Maryland plantation, escaped to the North in
1849 and led more than 300 slaves to freedom via the Underground Railroad
b. Sojourner Truth (1790's?-1883) -- an American abolitionist and feminist who was born into slavery and was freed in 1827 who later became a leader who fought for rights of women and against slavery
c. Nat Turner (1800-1831) -- an rebellious slaver leader who organized followers who killed several white slave owners and was later executed

2. Abolition (and all forms of the word) -- the process of destroying or eliminating slavery

C. For Students
1. American History (starting from grade two) from the Core Knowledge Sequence:
   a. Slave life and rebellions and the effect on young America and its people
   b. Industrial North versus agricultural South
   c. Controversy over slavery
   d. Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad
   e. Emancipation Proclamation and the end of slavery

IV. RESOURCES
A. Follow the Drinking Gourd video or DVD
B. Follow the Drinking Gourd book
C. Follow the Drinking Gourd Teacher Song Sheet
D. Follow the Drinking Gourd Interpretation Sheet
E. Follow the Drinking Gourd Vocal Interview
F. Follow the Drinking Gourd Word Find
G. Follow the Drinking Gourd Essay Test
H. Follow the Drinking Gourd Note and Symbol Assessment
I. Follow the Drinking Gourd Assessment Answer Sheet
J. Ballad of the Underground Railroad Teacher Song Sheet
K. Ballad of the Underground Railroad Student Lyric Sheet
L. Ballad of the Underground Railroad Note and Symbol Assessment
M. Ballad of the Underground Railroad Note and Symbol Assessment Answers
N. Get on Board Teacher Song Sheet
O. Get on Board Student Song Sheet
P. Music Flash Cards (with notes and symbols)
Q. Map of the United States (and, if desired for clarity, a large map that shows Alabama, Tennessee, and the Tombigbee, Tennessee and Ohio Rivers)
R. Follow the Drinking Gourd Family Activity Sheet

V. LESSONS
Lesson One: Follow the Drinking Gourd
A. Daily Objectives
   1. Concept Objective(s):
      a. The students will become familiar with several songs associated with American slaves and be able to analyze the content of the song for historical references in the lyrics, time periods, places and events
b. The students will develop accuracy in vocal performance.

2. Lesson Content:
   a. African-Americans, many spirituals go back to the days of slavery
   b. *Follow the Drinking Gourd* (book and song)

3. Skill Objective(s):
   a. Sing with accuracy.
   b. Listening comprehension.

B. Materials
   1. *Follow the Drinking Gourd* book
   2. *Follow the Drinking Gourd* songsheets (students' and teacher's copies)
   3. (if available) *Follow the Drinking Gourd* recording
   4. CD, audio cassette player or keyboard

C. Key Vocabulary
   1. Little Dipper -- a constellation that contains the North Star at the tip
   2. Drinking Gourd -- Little Dipper
   3. Polaris -- the largest star in the Little Dipper, also called the North Star
   4. Journeyman -- a person (in this scenario, Peg Leg Joe) who is a carpenter or has another trade or craft
   5. Underground Railroad --
      a. a secret route slaves used to escape to freedom in the northern part of the United States or Canada and
      b. a secret and cooperative network that enabled slaves/escapees to hide in houses, barns, boats, carriages, etc. while trying to escape

D. Procedures/Activities
   1. Ask what the children already know about the Underground Railroad
   2. Ask if the children to share what they already know about Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Nat Turner and/or others involved in abolition or helping slaves escape
   3. Read the book and share the pictures of *Follow the Drinking Gourd*
   4. Encourage a brief discussion on what happened in the story
   5. Distribute and teach the children to sing *Follow the Drinking Gourd*
   6. Learn to sing *Follow the Drinking Gourd*

E. Informal Assessment/Evaluation
   1. Ask the students what they have learned that they did not already know about the material presented today
   2. Make a mental note or keep a checklist of who participated in the discussion and sharing of knowledge in today's lesson

Lesson Two: *Follow the Drinking Gourd*, the Video

A. Daily Objectives
   1. Concept Objective(s):
      a. The students will become familiar with several songs associated with American slaves and be able to analyze the content of the song for historical references in the lyrics, time periods, places and events
      b. The students will develop accuracy in vocal performance.
   2. Lesson Content:
      a. African-Americans, many spirituals go back to the days of slavery
      b. *Follow the Drinking Gourd*
   3. Skill Objective(s):
      a. Compare and contrast
Lesson Three: Follow the Drinking Gourd, Singing, Listening and Creating

A. Daily Objectives
1. Concept Objective(s):
   a. The students will become familiar with several songs associated with American slaves and be able to analyze the content of the song for historical references in the lyrics, time periods, places and events
   b. The students will develop accuracy in vocal performance.
2. Lesson Content:
   a. African-Americans, many spirituals go back to the days of slavery
   b. Elements of music
4. Skill Objective(s):
   a. Sing with accuracy.
   b. Listening comprehension.

B. Materials
1. Follow the Drinking Gourd Interpretation Sheet
2. Paper for artwork
3. Crayons, colored pencils or water colors
4. (if available) Follow the Drinking Gourd recording
5. CD, audio cassette player or keyboard

C. Key Vocabulary
1. No new vocabulary

D. Procedures/Activities
1. Distribute the *Follow the Drinking Gourd* Interpretation Sheet
2. Sing the melody *(in bold print)* and speak the *italicized* lyrics
3. Discuss how the *Follow the Drinking Gourd* Interpretation Sheet helps explain the artwork they will be creating in this lesson
4. Tell the children they will create artwork that shows what the book, video, song and interpretation of *Follow the Drinking Gourd* were about.
5. Tell the children that while they work the song *Follow the Drinking Gourd* will repeat several times (this will also help your students to learn the song and will remind them of the "code/key" words while they are drawing)
6. Inform the students that this was the method that the slaves used to learn the code/key words in the story
7. Read the list of the code/key words the students should listen for
8. Tell them to listen for them as they create their artwork
9. Collect the artwork at the end of class, or, if necessary, allow the students to bring in their completed artwork in the next class

E. Subjective Assessment/Evaluation
1. Look for how the code/key words played a significant role in their artwork. Grade the artwork on the richness and magnitude of detail and how the lyrics and story are evident
2. Display the artwork that best tells the story.

**Lesson Four: Ballad of the Underground Railroad**

A. Daily Objectives

1. Concept Objective(s):
   a. The students will become familiar with several songs associated with American slaves and be able to analyze the content of the song for historical references in the lyrics, time periods, places and events
   b. The students will develop accuracy in vocal performance.

2. Lesson Content:
   a. *Ballad of the Underground Railroad*
   b. Elements of Music

3. Skill Objective(s):
   a. Sing with accuracy.
   b. Compare and contrast.
   c. Listening comprehension.

B. Materials

1. Teacher copy of *Ballad of the Underground Railroad*
2. Student lyric sheet of *Ballad of the Underground Railroad*
3. piano, keyboard or synthesizer (optional)
4. vocabulary words displayed on the board

C. Key Vocabulary

1. Underground Railroad -- A secret cooperative network that aided fugitive slaves in reaching freedom in the north free before the abolition of slavery in the United States.
2. Polaris -- The star at the end of the handle of the Little Dipper, also called *North Star*
3. free -- those who are not imprisoned
4. freedom -- the liberty of being without slavery or oppression
5. Quakers -- A Society of Friends (a Christian sect) founded in England in the middle 1600's that rejects violence; a religion that uses silence to connect with God, the silence is broken when someone feels moved to stand and share
6. Indians -- Native Americans or members of any of the aboriginal peoples of the Western Hemisphere
7. Gentile -- those who are not of the Jewish faith, usually meaning Christian
8. Jew -- a person practicing Judaism as a religion and those who are descendants of the ancient Hebrews
9. Christian -- those who profess belief in Jesus Christ
10. Atheist -- one who does not believe in God or gods
11. Conductor -- one who is in charge of a train
12. Agent -- a spy
13. Fugitive -- someone running away
14. Slavery -- a forced working service
15. Overseer -- one who keeps watch over laborers
16. Auctioneer -- a person who directs the sale of property or items as they are sold to the highest bidder.
17. Master -- one who has control over or ownership of something
18. Bloodhound -- a breed of dog with a keen sense of smell.
19. Riddle -- a question that must be understood before the answer can be given
20. Code -- symbols or words that can mean something entirely different than what is written or said
21. Code word -- a secret word or a pass word, a word with shared meaning among those who are in on a secret
22. Ballad -- a folk song with simple stanzas that has recurrent refrain, and a song that tells a story

D. Procedures/Activities
1. Have the students read the vocabulary words from the board or a poster
2. Tell the students that Ballad of the Underground Railroad is a ballad
3. Have the students listen for the vocabulary words and how when sung in the song it explains how the Underground Railroad worked
4. Have the students sing the song with you as you play the accompaniment (accompaniment is optional)
5. Ask content questions about Ballad of the Underground Railroad
   a. Who was trying to escape?
   b. Why were these people trying to escape?
   c. Who helped them?
   d. When was this taking place?
   e. What is the Underground Railroad?
   f. How does this song relate to Follow the Drinking Gourd?
   g. What can you (the student) add to explain the meaning behind Ballad of the Underground Railroad?
   h. Does Ballad of the Underground Railroad tell the story through song lyrics?
   i. What musically recurs after some of the verses? (refrain)

In remaining time

6. Review musical symbols and notes from Core Knowledge sequence to prepare for future assessments
E. Informal Assessment/Evaluation
   1. Ask the students what vocabulary they have learned in the material presented today
   2. Make a mental note or keep a checklist of who participated in the discussion and sharing of knowledge in today's lesson

Lesson Five: Get On Board
A. Daily Objectives
   1. Concept Objective(s):
      a. The students will become familiar with several songs associated with American slaves and be able to analyze the content of the song for historical references in the lyrics, time periods, places and events
      b. The students will develop accuracy in vocal performance.
   2. Lesson Content:
      a. Get On Board
      b. Elements of Music
   3. Skill Objective(s):
      a. Identify note names and symbols.
      b. Sing with accuracy.
      c. Compare and contrast.
      d. Listening comprehension.

B. Materials
   1. Musical flash cards that include all symbols and notes suggested in the Core Knowledge Sequence
   2. Teacher copy of Get On Board
   3. Student copy of Get On Board
   4. Overhead projector
   5. Instrument for accompaniment (optional)

C. Key Vocabulary
   1. All music vocabulary would include but not be limited to:
      a. Notes -- sixteenth, eighth, quarter, half, whole, and dotted notes
      b. Rests -- sixteenth, eighth, quarter, half, whole, and dotted rests
      c. Time signatures
      d. Key signatures
      e. Bar line - a single line separating measures, a musical measure separating a specific amount of notes and beats that enables the player to readily understand how the composer wished to have the piece played
      f. Repeat sign - a musical shortcut, two dots followed by two lines symbolizing to play that section again
      g. Dynamic markings - markings used to communicate loudness and softness as desired by the composer
      h. Verse - a metrical or rhymed composition that convey the subject the music is about
      i. Refrain (chorus) -- the part of a song which recurs after a verse or series or verses that remains unchanged

D. Procedures/Activities
   1. Tell the students that in this lesson the students will learn to sing Get On Board, review all of their musical symbols and notes AND analyze a musical score
2. Review musical symbols via flashcards (spend as much time as needed to make sure students are able to identify and explain the notes and symbols)

3. Distribute *Get On Board* to students

4. Learn to sing *Get On Board*

5. Place a student copy of *Get On Board* on the overhead projector

6. Ask questions about the score:
   a. What is the title of the song?
   b. What kind of song is this?
   c. How does this song relate to *Follow the Drinking Gourd* and *Ballad of the Underground Railroad*? (unit of study -- The Underground Railroad)
   d. What is the time signature?
   e. What does the 4/4 mean?
      1. How many beats per measure? (4)
      2. What note gets one beat? (quarter)
   f. How many measures are in *Get On Board*? (13)
   g. How many half rests are in your copy of *Get On Board*? (1)
      1. In what measure(s)? (#1)
   h. How many quarter rests
      1. In what measure(s)? (#1 and 13)
      (i.) More questions of this nature regarding notes and rests
   j. How many double bar lines are in your copy of *Get On Board*? (1 in measure 13)
   k. Read the note names in measure 10. (D,F, F, F, F, G, F)
   (l.) More questions of this nature regarding notes and rests

7. Have the students sing *Get on Board* again before leaving

8. Tell the students they will be having a note and symbols test during the next class period

E. Informal Assessment/Evaluation

1. Make a mental note or keep a checklist of those who participated in the analysis.

2. Call on every student to check for understanding

**Lesson Six: Assessment on Notes and Symbols of Follow the Drinking Gourd**

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s):
   a. The students will become familiar with several songs associated with American slaves and be able to analyze the content of the song for historical references in the lyrics, time periods, places and events
   b. The students will develop accuracy in vocal performance.

2. Lesson Content:
   a. *Follow the Drinking Gourd*
   b. Elements of music

4. Skill Objective(s):
   a. Identify note names and symbols.
   b. Sing with accuracy.
   c. Compare and contrast
   d. Listening comprehension.

B. *Materials*
1. Copies of *Follow the Drinking Gourd Notes and Symbols Test*
2. Writing Utensils

C. **Key Vocabulary**
1. All music vocabulary reviewed in lesson five and would include but not be limited to:
   a. Notes -- sixteenth, eighth, quarter, half, whole, and dotted notes
   b. Rests -- sixteenth, eighth, quarter, half, whole, and dotted rests
   c. Time signatures
   d. Key signatures
   e. Bar lines - a single line separating measures, a musical measure separating a specific amount of notes and beats that enables the player to readily understand how the composer wished to have the piece played
   f. Repeat signs - a musical shortcut, two dots followed by two lines symbolizing to play that section again
   g. Dynamic markings - markings used to communicate loudness and softness as desired by the composer
   h. Verse - a metrical or rhymed composition that convey the subject the music is about
   i. Refrain (chorus) -- the part of a song which recurs after a verse or series or verses that remains unchanged

D. **Procedures/Activities**
1. Drill with note and symbol flashcards
2. Distribute *Follow the Drinking Gourd Notes and Symbols Test*
3. Explain the directions in the box at the beginning of each line
4. Have the students take the test

E. **Objective Assessment/Evaluation**
1. Develop a rubric to grade the *Follow the Drinking Gourd Notes and Symbols Test*
2. Grade the test

**Lesson Seven: Follow the Drinking Gourd, Singing and Memorizing**

A. **Daily Objectives**
1. Concept Objective(s):
   a. The students will become familiar with several songs associated with American slaves and be able to analyze the content of the song for historical references in the lyrics, time periods, places and events
   b. The students will develop accuracy in vocal performance.
2. Lesson Content:
   a. African-American spirituals
   b. Elements of Music
4. Skill Objective(s):
   a. Identify note names and symbols.
   b. Sing with accuracy
   c. Listening comprehension.

B. **Materials**
1. *Follow the Drinking Gourd* songsheet (included in the appendix)
2. (optional) *Follow the Drinking Gourd* recording
3. CD, audio cassette player or keyboard
C. **Key Vocabulary** (Music Performance)
   1. Verse - a metrical or rhymed composition that convey the subject the music is about
   2. Refrain (chorus) - the part of a song which recurs after a verse or series or verses that remains unchanged
   3. Melody the part of a song that is easily recognized or stands on its own and can be performed alone or in unison
   4. Repeated melodic and/or rhythmic patterns -- a recurring beat or musical phrase, a uniqueness that makes the song identifiable

D. **Procedures/Activities**
   1. Tell the students that they will be having a Vocal Interview (singing test) in the next class
   2. Have the students learn to sing *Follow the Drinking Gourd* with melodic and lyric accuracy. (This will be an easy activity since they listened to the recording several times while creating artwork in a previous class.)
   3. Review singing *Ballad of the Underground Railroad* and *Get On Board*
   4. In remaining time, return and review the *Follow the Drinking Gourd Notes and Symbols Test*
      a. share with students what the correct answers should have been (if desired, this may be done by placing the answer sheet on the overhead projector)
   5. Tell the students they will need their crayons in the next class for a wordfind activity

E. **Informal Assessment/Evaluation**
   1. Keep a checklist on who is matching pitch, performing rhythmic phrases correctly, and effort

**Lesson Eight: Vocal Interview, *Follow the Drinking Gourd* and WordFind Activity**

A. **Daily Objectives**
   1. Concept Objective(s):
      a. The students will become familiar with several songs associated with American slaves and be able to analyze the content of the song for historical references in the lyrics, time periods, places and events
      b. The students will develop accuracy in vocal performance.
   2. Lesson Content:
      a. *Follow the Drinking Gourd*
      b. Elements of Music
   3. Skill Objective(s):
      a. Identify note names and symbols.
      b. Sing with accuracy.

B. **Materials**
   1. Vocal Interview Sheet (one per student)
   2. *Follow the Drinking Gourd WordFind* Sheet (one per student)
   3. Crayons in the colors listed on the Wordfind sheet
   3. (if desired) CD, audio cassette player or keyboard

C. **Key Vocabulary**
   1. Geography:
      a. Tombigbee, Tennessee and Ohio Rivers
      b. South to North
      c. Alabama
2. Astronomy:
   a. Night sky
   b. Polaris, Drinking Gourd, Little Dipper, North Star
3. Code/Key Words
   a. Clues
      1. Left Foot, Peg Foot
      2. Two Hills
      3. Dead Trees
      4. Quail
      5. Underground Railroad
      6. Escape
      7. Freedom
      8. Verse and Chorus/Refrain
      9. Slaves
      10. Journeyman
      11. Master
      12. Peg Leg Joe
      13. Old Man

D. Procedures/Activities
   1. Distribute Vocal Interview and show the students how they will be assessed
      on their singing ability and effort
   2. Have the students write their names and date on the top of the Vocal Interview
      sheet and return to the teacher who will then complete the assessment as
      they sing in groups
   2. Tell the students you will be having them sing for you in quartets (or as
      desired) (usually the first verse and chorus/refrain are all you need to
      assess singing skills -- but have the students repeat as many times as
      necessary)
   3. Review singing Follow the Drinking Gourd one last time
   4. Distribute the Follow the Drinking Gourd Word find
   5. Tell the students that while others are taking part in the vocal assessment they
      will be completing the word find activity with the colors listed
   6. Have group one sing for you as you listen and assess
   7. Repeat step six as needed until all groups have sung and you have assessed
      them

E. Subjective Assessment/Evaluation
   1. Complete a Follow the Drinking Gourd Vocal Interview sheet for each
      student listing their strengths, weaknesses, ways to improve and
      comments
   2. Share the results in a future lesson

Lesson Nine: Essay Test, Follow the Drinking Gourd
A. Daily Objectives
   1. Concept Objective(s):
      a. The students will become familiar with several songs associated with
         American slaves and be able to analyze the content of the song for
         historical references in the lyrics, time periods, places and events
      b. The students will develop accuracy in vocal performance.
   2. Lesson Content:
      a. Review
3. **Skill Objective(s):**  
   a. Identify note names and symbols.  
   b. Sing with accuracy.  
   c. Writing a response.  

**B. Materials**  
1. *Follow the Drinking Gourd Essay Test* (one per student)  
2. Writing utensil  
3. (if desired, to play as the children write their essays) *Follow the Drinking Gourd* recording  
4. CD, audio cassette player or keyboard  

**C. Key Vocabulary:**  
1. Not applicable in this lesson  

**D. Procedures/Activities**  
1. Distribute the *Follow the Drinking Gourd Essay Test* (have extra paper for those students who write more)  
2. Review the essay test direction  
3. Administer the assessment (allow at least 30 minutes -- those who finish may earlier may draw a picture of the Little Dipper)  
4. Collect assessments  

**E. Assessment/Evaluation**  
1. Grade the students on the correctness and wealth of material. (Writing technique is subjective and the administering teacher should consider what is deemed appropriate for an individual student's learning style.)  

**VI. CULMINATING ACTIVITY**  
A. Have the students take their parents outside in the evening to share the story and music of The Underground Railroad. A *Follow the Drinking Gourd Family Activity* sheet is included for your convenience. You may wish to consider using this as a homework assignment. The *Follow the Drinking Gourd Family Activity* has created quite a bit of interest and communication in my students and their families. I highly recommend your trying this activity.  
B. The teacher should strongly consider displaying the best student work samples. The many styles of assessment will show that you are adept at addressing all learning styles.  
C. Invite administration and classroom teachers to view your students' display. This will provide documentation that you do indeed teach across the curriculum.  

**VII. HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS**  
(All are included in the Appendices with the exception of P and Q)  
A. *Follow the Drinking Gourd* video or DVD  
B. *Follow the Drinking Gourd* book  
C. *Follow the Drinking Gourd* Teacher Song Sheet  
D. *Follow the Drinking Gourd* Interpretation Sheet  
E. *Follow the Drinking Gourd* Vocal Interview  
F. *Follow the Drinking Gourd* Word Find  
G. *Follow the Drinking Gourd* Essay Test  
H. *Follow the Drinking Gourd* Note and Symbol Assessment  
I. *Follow the Drinking Gourd* Assessment Answer Sheet  
J. *Ballad of the Underground Railroad* Teacher Song Sheet  
K. *Ballad of the Underground Railroad* Student Lyric Sheet
L. Ballad of the Underground Railroad Note and Symbol Assessment
M. Ballad of the Underground Railroad Note and Symbol Assessment Answers
N. Get on Board Teacher Song Sheet
O. Get on Board Student Song Sheet
P. Music Flash Cards (with notes and symbols)
Q. Map of the United States (and, if desired for clarity, a large map that shows Alabama, Tennessee, and the Tombigbee, Tennessee and Ohio Rivers)
R. Follow the Drinking Gourd Family Activity Sheet

VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY
   Core Knowledge Sequence. Core Knowledge Foundation: 1999. 1-890517-20-8
   Follow the Drinking Gourd. Rabbit Ears Video: 1996
Appendices:

Follow the Drinking Gourd

(Translations of the lyrics of the song are in parenthesis and italics.)

Verse 1

When the sun comes back (spring) and the first quail calls, (migratory birds)
Follow the drinking gourd. (Little Dipper -- the bright star in the constellation of Polaris)
For the old man (Peg Leg Joe) is a-waiting for to carry you to freedom,
If you follow the drinking gourd.

Interpretation: When the slaves plan to leave in winter they should walk toward the brightest star in the Little Dipper aptly named The North Star. At a certain point they will meet up with a man who will escort them for the rest of the journey. The Ohio River was easiest to cross in winter because it was usually frozen and thus enabled persons to walk on the wide waterway. The trip usually took a year since the walk from the north to the south was long.

Verse 2

The river bank makes a mighty good road, (Tombigbee River)
The dead trees will show you the way. (Dead trees were marked with the drawings of a left foot and a right point,)
Left foot, peg foot, traveling on,
Follow the Drinking Gourd.

Interpretation: Since many rivers met at this area, only the Tombigbee trees were marked.

Verse 3

The river ends between two hills, (Tombigbee ends, but continue walking north)
Follow the Drinking Gourd.
There’s another river on the other side, (Tennessee River)
Follow the Drinking Gourd.

Verse 4

Where the great big river meets the little river, (Ohio River)
Follow the Drinking Gourd.
For the old man is a-waiting for to carry you to freedom if you (Guide)
Follow the Drinking Gourd.
**Interpretation:** The guide is a representative of the Underground Railroad.
Ballad of the Underground Railroad
Music and Lyrics by Blockson and McGowan
Arranged by Debra Kay Robinson Lindsay

1. The Underground Train, strange as it seems,
   Carried many passengers and never was seen.
   It wasn’t made of wood,
   It wasn’t made of steel;
   A man-made train that ran without wheels.

**Refrain:**
Tonight we ride The Underground Train.
It runs on tracks that are covered with pain.
The whole of humanity makes up the crew
And Liberty’s the engineer to carry us through.
The North Star will lead us
And Freedom will greet us
When we reach the end of the line.

2. The train was known by many a name
   But the greatest of all was “The Freedom Train.”
The Quakers and the Indians,
The Gentiles and the Jews,
Were some of the people who made up the crews.

**Refrain: (repeat)**

3. Free Blacks and Christians and
   Atheists, too,
Rest of the people who made up the crew. Conductors and agents led the way at night,
Guiding the train by the North Star Light.

4. The passengers were the fugitive slaves
   Running from slavery and its evil ways.
   Running from the whip and the overseer,
   From the slave block and the auctioneer.

**Refrain: (repeat)**

5. They didn’t want their masters to catch them again;
   So the men dressed as women and the women as men.
   They hid in churches, cellars and barns,
Waiting to hear the Train’s alarm.

6. Sleeping by day and traveling by night
   Was the best way to keep out of sight.
   They waded in the waters to hide their scent,
   And fool those bloodhounds that the slave masters sent.
   **Refrain:** (repeat)

7. They spoke in riddles and they
   sang in codes
   To understand the messages that
   were being told.
   Those who knew the secret, never did tell
   The sacred message of the “Freedom Train Bell.”

8. Riding this train broke laws of the land,
   But the laws they broke were the horrors of man.
   The train was known by many a name
   But the greatest of all was “The Freedom Train.”
   **Refrain:** (repeat)
VOCAL INTERVIEW

Dear ________________,

Today you sang *Follow the Drinking Gourd* for a vocal performance grade. Checked below is a list of how you performed. Use this evaluation to help you improve your performance.

Singing is an enjoyable activity you can engage in any time and anyplace. The more you practice, the easier it will be for you to sound as you want. Most of all, it is something you can do just for you!

Sincerely,

Music Teacher

_____ Sang with good pitch production
_____ Sang below pitch
_____ Sang above pitch
_____ Sang an octave lower where more comfortable (boys only)
_____ Used chest voice
_____ Used head voice (preferred)
_____ Used a speaking voice
_____ Sang expressively (with emotion and conviction about subject)
_____ Sang with understanding of the tempo
_____ Sang with proper phrasing
_____ Used diction that enabled the lyrics to be easily understood
_____ More effort needed to improve diction
_____ Sang audibly, with correct volume
_____ Incorporated correct dynamics
_____ Singing was difficult to hear
_____ Showed optimum effort
_____ Stood correctly for projecting your voice
_____ Showed poise and confidence
_____ Other

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Parent Signature ______________________________   Date ___/___/_____
FOLLOW THE DRINKING GOURD

FAMILY ACTIVITY

Dear ______________________________,

I am working on a Follow the Drinking Gourd unit in music. I have learned many new facts about the Underground Railroad that I would like to share with you. Could you please come outside with me tonight as I tell you the story and sing the song? I will need to refer to the North Star as I tell the story.

Thank you,

______________________
Parent Signature ______________________________ Date ___/___/____
Follow the Drinking Gourd
Essay Test

Write everything you have learned in our Follow the Drinking Gourd Unit. Remembering the lyrics of the song will guide your writing.
Follow the Drinking Gourd

African-American Folk Song about the Underground Railroad

Arranged by Debra Lindsay

1. Follow the drinking gourd. For the old man is awaiting for to carry you to freedom, if you follow the drinking gourd. First quail calls, very good road. The dead trees will show you the way. Left foot, right foot, between two hills. Follow the drinking gourd. Now a nother river on the little river. Follow the drinking gourd. For the old man is awaiting for to

1. When the sun comes back and the 2. The river bank makes a 3. The river ends below 4. When the great big river meets the
carry you to freedom, if you follow the drinking gourd.
traveling on, Follow the drinking gourd.
other side, if you follow the drinking gourd. Carry you to freedom, if you follow the drinking gourd.

Follow the drinking gourd. Follow the drinking gourd. Follow the drinking gourd.

drinking gourd. Follow the drinking gourd. For the old man is waiting for to
carry you to freedom, if you follow the drinking gourd.
Ballad of the Underground Railroad

Music and Lyrics by Blockson and McGowan
Arranged by Debra Kay Robinson Lindsay

With feeling and understanding

1. The
2. The
3.

Under-ground Train, Strange as it seems, Car-ried man-y pass-en-gers and
train was known by man-y a name. But the greatest of all was "The
Free Blacks and Christians, and A-the-ists, too, rest of the peo-ple who

never was seen. It was -n't made of wood, it was -n't made of steel; A
made up the crew. Conduc-tors and agents, led the way at night,
man-made train that ran without wheels To-night we ride The Under-ground Train. It
some of the people who made up the crews,
Guiding the train by the North-Star Light.

runs on tracks that are covered with pain, whole of hu-man-it-y makes up the crew— and

Lib-er-ty's the en-gineer to car-ry us through. The North Star will lead us and

Free-dom will greet us when we reach the end of the line.
4. The passengers were
The fugitive slaves
Running from slavery
And its evil ways.
Running from the whip
And the overseer,
From the slave block
And the auctioneer.
(Repeat Chorus)

5. They didn’t want their masters
To catch them again,
So the men dressed as women
And the women as men.
They hid in churches,
Cellars and barns,
Waiting to hear the
Train’s alarm
(Repeat Chorus)

6. Sleeping by day,
And traveling by night,
Was the best way
To keep out of sight.
They waded in the waters
To hide their scent,
And fool those bloodhounds
That the slavemasters sent
(Repeat Chorus)

7. They spoke in riddles
And they sang in codes,
To understand the messages
That was being told.
Those who knew the secret
Never did tell
The sacred message
Of the “Freedom Train’s Bell.
(Repeat Chorus)

8. Riding this train
Broke the laws of the land,
But the laws they broke
Were the horrors of man.
The train was known by many a name
But the greatest of all was
“The Freedom Train.”
(Repeat Chorus)
Get on Board, Little Children
A Song About the Underground Railroad

Get on board, little children, Get on board, little children, There's room for many a more.

1. The gospel train's a coming, I hear it close at hand.
2. The fare is cheap and all can hear the car wheels rumbling and rich and poor are there.

No second class aboard this No rolling through the land.

Get on board, little children, Get on board, little children, There's room for many a more.
Follow the Drinking Gourd

(Translations of the lyrics of the song are in parenthesis and italics.)

♫ ♪ Verse 1 ♪ ♫

When the sun comes back (spring) and the first quail calls, (migratory birds)

Follow the drinking gourd. (Little Dipper -- the bright star in the constellation of Polaris)

For the old man (Peg Leg Joe) is a-waiting for to carry you to freedom,
If you follow the drinking gourd.

Interpretation: When the slaves plan to leave in winter they should walk toward the brightest star in the Little Dipper aptly named The North Star. At a certain point they will meet up with a man who will escort them for the rest of the journey. The Ohio River was easiest to cross in winter because it was usually frozen and thus enabled persons to walk on the wide waterway. The trip usually took a year since the walk from the north to the south was long.

♫ ♪ Verse 2 ♪ ♫

The river bank makes a mighty good road, (Tombigbee River)

The dead trees will show you the way. (Dead trees were marked with the drawings of a left foot and a right point.)

Left foot, peg foot, traveling on,

Follow the Drinking Gourd.

Interpretation: Since many rivers met at this area, only the Tombigbee trees were marked.

♫ ♪ Verse 3 ♪ ♫

The river ends between two hills. (Tombigbee ends, but continue walking north)

Follow the Drinking Gourd.

There’s another river on the other side, (Tennessee River)

Follow the Drinking Gourd.

♫ ♪ Verse 4 ♪ ♫

Where the great big river meets the little river, (Ohio River)

Follow the Drinking Gourd.

For the old man is a-waiting for to carry you to freedom if you (Guide)

Follow the Drinking Gourd.

Interpretation: The guide is a representative of the Underground Railroad.
Ballad of the Underground Railroad

Music and Lyrics by Blockson and McGowan
Arranged by Debra Kay Robinson Lindsay

1. The Underground Train, strange as it seems,
   Carried many passengers and never was seen.
   It wasn’t made of wood,
   It wasn’t made of steel;
   A man-made train that ran without wheels.

   Refrain
   Tonight we ride The Underground Train.
   It runs on tracks that are covered with pain.
   The whole of humanity makes up the crew
   And Liberty’s the engineer to carry us through.
   The North Star will lead us
   And Freedom will greet us
   When we reach the end of the line.

2. The train was known by many a name
   But the greatest of all was “The Freedom Train.”
   The Quakers and the Indians,
   The Gentiles and the Jews,
   Were some of the people who made up the crews.

   Refrain: (repeat)

3. Free Blacks and Christians and Atheists, too,
   Rest of the people who made up the crew.
   Conductors and agents led the way at night,
   Guiding the train by the North Star Light.

   Refrain: (repeat)

4. The passengers were the fugitive slaves
   Running from slavery and its evil ways.
   Running from the whip and the overseer,
   From the slave block and the auctioneer.

   Refrain: (repeat)

5. They didn’t want their masters to catch them again;
   So the men dressed as women and the women as men.
   They hid in churches, cellars and barns,
   Waiting to hear the Train’s alarm.

6. Sleeping by day and traveling by night
   Was the best way to keep out of sight.
   They waded in the waters to hide their scent,
   And fool those bloodhounds that the slave masters sent.

   Refrain: (repeat)

7. They spoke in riddles and they sang in codes
   To understand the messages that were being told.
   Those who knew the secret, never did tell
   The sacred message of the “Freedom Train Bell.”

8. Riding this train broke laws of the land,
   But the laws they broke were the horrors of man.
   The train was known by many a name
   But the greatest of all was “The Freedom Train.”

   Refrain: (repeat)

Name _______________________

Date _____/____/____

Class ______________________

2004 Core Knowledge® National Conference, Realism in Music, The Underground Railroad, Music (Grade 5)
Get On Board
_A song of The Underground Railroad_

Starting slow and speeding up

Arranged by Debra Kay Robinson Lindsay

like a train whistle and engine

Get on board, little children, Get on board, little children, Get on board, little children, There's room for many a more.

1. The
2. The
room for many a more.

fading away
Follow the Drinking Gourd Notes and Symbols Test

Name __________________ Date ___/___ Class ______

1. Circle the half notes and the time signature.

2. Circle all of the "D's".

3. Circle the whole note(s) and the sharp.

4. Circle the ties.

5. Circle all of the "G's".

6. Circle the quarter note(s).
Follow the Drinking Gourd Notes and Symbols Answers

Name __________________ Date _________ Class _________

1. Circle the half notes and the time signature.

2. Circle all of the "D's".

3. Circle the whole note(s) and the sharp.

4. Circle the beginning and ending of the tie(s).

5. Circle all of the "G's".

6. Circle the quarter note(s).
Follow the Drinking Gourd Word Find Puzzle

Directions: Below you will find several words that are necessary to understand the song, "Follow the Drinking Gourd." Using the colors suggested below, you will find these words forward and backwards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLACES</th>
<th>NIGHT SKY</th>
<th>CLUES</th>
<th>KEY WORDS</th>
<th>PEOPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turquoise</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Lime Green</td>
<td>Gray</td>
<td>Pink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tombigbee</td>
<td>Sky</td>
<td>Left Foot, Peg Foot</td>
<td>Underground Railroad</td>
<td>Slaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee River</td>
<td>Polaris</td>
<td>Two Hills</td>
<td>Escape</td>
<td>Journeyman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio River</td>
<td>Drinking Gourd</td>
<td>Dead Trees</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>Master</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>Little Dipper</td>
<td>Quail</td>
<td>Verse</td>
<td>Peg Leg Joe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River</td>
<td>North Star</td>
<td></td>
<td>Chorus</td>
<td>Old Man</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Word grid image]

South to North

Name ___________________   Date _____ / _____ / _____   Class ____________
Follow the Drinking Gourd

Essay Test

Name __________________ Date __/__/___ Class __________

Write everything you have learned in our Follow the Drinking Gourd Unit. Remembering the lyrics of the song will guide your writing.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Ballad of the Underground Railroad
Note and Symbol Test

1. Circle the dotted quarter notes.

2. Write each note name under the note.

3. Circle the dotted eighth notes.

4. Circle the eighth rests.

5. Circle the double bar line(s) and the treble clef(s).

Name ____________________ Date __/__/____ Class ____________________
Ballad of the Underground Railroad
Note and Symbol Answers

1. Circle the dotted quarter note(s).

2. Write each note name under the note.

3. Circle the dotted eighth notes.

4. Circle the eighth rest(s) and sharp(s).

5. Circle the double bar line(s) and the treble clef(s).