**Protest Songs**

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Grade : 6th

Materials: Guitar, Piano, Youtube clips,

**Big Idea:** Protest Songs

**Enduring Understandings:**

* How is music used as a form of protest or political expressionism?
* How we use music to express ideas, thoughts, feelings
* Popular protest songs from the mid 1900’s (specifically Civil Rights Movement)
* Using personal expression in compositional form, such as protest songs
* Learning a protest song

**Process:**Begin by asking the students leading questions about protest songs.

* Discuss and define the idea behind a protest song.
* Discuss songs that students know to be protest songs. Titles/Artists/Albums
* What is the message? How is it conveyed?
* How do the music and the words coincide or connect? How does the music effect the emotion and meaning? Does the music ever disguise the words?

Make a comprehensive list of things students could protest. What kinds of things in their lives would they protests about?

Present a history of protests songs. Where they come from? Different varieties, influence and origins? Show some examples of protest songs from the 1960’s pertaining to the Civil Rights Movement to exemplify and place in context the previous discussions.

Play clips from the following options:

* "We Shall Overcome" - Pete Seeger or Charles Tindley  
  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QhnPVP23rzo>
* "A Change Is Gonna Come" - Sam Cooke  
  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NaNzxniXxYE>
* "Freedom Train" - James Carr  
  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gwfums63zjU>
* "Abraham, Matin, and John" - Marvin Gaye  
  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nbnaaz75M4g>
* "Blowin in the WInd" - Bob Dylan or Peter, Paul, and Mary  
  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3t4g_1VoGw4>
* "We Shall Not Be Moved" - Pete Seeger  
  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CQNRiOJRa94>
* "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around" (Pete Seeger)  
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fpbfM7pojWU

**Teach the students, by rote** "Oh Freedom" – Odetta   
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfXdTWFwPLk&feature=related>

<http://www.traditionalmusic.co.uk/folk-songs-with-chords/Oh%20Freedom.htm>

(guitar chords)

*The class will sing “Oh Freedom” with simple accompaniment (guitar and piano).*

After learning the song, students will transition to composing lyrics for their own protest songs using the list of things the class came up with earlier in the lesson. In groups of 3, students will composer their own protest songs.

* 6 line refrain
* One 4 line verse (Two verses are optional)

Each group will share with their composition with the class.

End by discussing with students how each song reflected each group’s personal expression and protest.

**Enriching and Expanding:**

Students will compose a theme for their refrain. The theme must fit rhythmically with the words and consist of a melody and a simple chord progression

Or

Students will choose any pop songs and incorporate their group’s protests composition.