

Title: *Remix*

Integrating global music into classroom instruction provides a gateway to exploring and connecting across cultures. Music has always been a vital part of human expression. It has the power to engage, motivate and inspire students and builds bridges between both what is familiar and what is unfamiliar. The integration of music across the curriculum enables students to engage in rich textual analysis of diverse, interdisciplinary primary source materials, as well further develop global competency skills such as recognizing perspectives and communicating across cultures. This lesson integrates music from the album [Wu Fei and Abigail Washburn](#), available through Smithsonian Folkways.

Lesson Theme: Student collaboration to analyze and arrange music using global music concepts

Featured Songs: “Four Seasons Medley: Four Seasons/Dark Ocean Waltz”; “The Roving Cowboy/Avarguli”

Overview: In this series of lessons, students will explore how Abigail Washburn and Wu Fei created the two featured songs. Students will analyze and explore a variety of examples of music from around the world. Students will also explore improvisations using inspiration from various cultures and genres of music and, ultimately, arrange their own music using global influences.

Suggested Grade levels: 8-12

Subject: Instrumental Music

Corresponding National Standards: MU:Cr1:1.E.IIa, MU:Cr2.1.E.IIa, MU:Cr3.1.E.8a, MU:Cr3.2.E.IIIa
<https://nafme.org/wp-content/files/2014/11/2014-Music-Standards-Ensemble-Strand.pdf>

Corresponding Global Competency Skills: [Asia Society’s Global Competency Skills](#):
Investigate the World; Recognize Perspectives; Communicate Ideas

Essential Questions:

1. How can I effectively enhance existing music with global influences?
2. How can I collaborate with musicians?

Lesson Objectives:

1. Students will be able to identify similarities and differences in the way music is produced in various cultures and genres.
2. Students will be able to arrange music using at least 3 global music concepts.

Materials:

- Instruments
- Well-known sheet music
- Computer and Projector; Internet access

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- [Aavguli Student Instructions](#)
- [Four Seasons Student Instructions](#)
- [Remix Family Interview Questions](#)
- [Assessment Rubric](#)

Student Activities:

Day 1

1. Lesson introduction. Give students general details about Wu Fei and Abigail Washburn. Be sure to include where they were born, how they began learning their instruments, and how they came to make music together. <https://supchina.com/2016/12/07/wu-fei-abigail-washburn-backgrounder/>.
2. Students will listen to “Four Seasons Medley: Four Seasons/Dark Ocean Waltz” and “The Roving Cowboy/Avarguli”
3. After listening to the songs as a whole class, students will work in pairs or small groups to read, listen and discuss one of the two songs. Following small group work, students share with the whole group. See “Four Seasons Student Instructions” (add link) and “Avarguli Student Instructions” (add link) for student instructions.

Day 2

4. Students will watch “[Wu Fei’s Guzheng Experiment](#).” This video outlines Wu Fei’s experience as a music student in China and the contrast of that experience versus her experience with American music. In the video, she has returned to China to be part of an ensemble to create new music, which at the time was not common. At the end of the video, have students discuss what they gleaned about improvisation from Wu Fei. Teachers should be sure to highlight Wu Fei’s comment about having to come to America to “let it all go”, as well as her inspiration from nature.
5. Students will analyze several music examples from various cultures using [The Global Jukebox](#). After listening, students should discuss what they heard and what makes it unique or similar to music they listen to regularly. Compile a list of the global music concepts discussed. Some concepts include, but are not limited to: call and response, layering, use of percussive sounds, improvisation, embellishments, vocalization or mimicking voice with instruments, free form, changes in tempi, dynamics, time, etc.

Day 3:

6. Have students assemble in groups of 3-5. Student groups should determine a leader. The leader will establish an improvised motif, using no more than 3 notes, in a repeated pattern. One by one, other students will add their own motif to the existing one. Students will continue layering until everyone is playing simultaneously. Then, the leader will signal the end. Repeat this process until each group member has had a chance to lead. Reiterate to students during this process that the focus should be on exploration of sound, not finding something performance ready.
7. Next, students will decide on an inspiration from a specific genre of music or culture. Use the compiled list (from Day 2) of global music concepts for inspiration. Repeat step #5 using the characteristics and

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inspiration from various cultures or genres. Repeat the process until each leader has selected a global music concept and led a jam/improv session incorporating their chosen concept.

Optional Extension Activities

- Have students interview a family member about their cultural heritage and the use of music in that culture using the "[Remix Family Interview](#)." Use these influences in step #7 instead of selecting from a generic list.
- Expand on the improvisation activity by adding variations:
 - Have the leader alter dynamics, tempi, articulation by using only gestures
 - Use extended techniques, explore percussive sounds on non-percussion instruments, etc.
 - Try the activity in larger groups, or switch groups after a certain amount of time
- Class Discussion:
 - What are the ways you improvise in your life?
 - In what ways do you arrange ahead of time?
 - What music do you listen to at home, and how did that influence your choices in your jam/improv groups?

Days 3-5:

8. Students work with a small group (2-4 members) to create a mash up of a piece of music they know very well, combined with at least THREE global music concepts. Students can use a piece of music previously performed at a concert, an easy example from a method book, a chamber music piece, or anything that is familiar to them and does not require a lot of practice.

9. After the teacher has assisted in the selection of the well-known music, they should guide students toward their next steps with questioning: What can you alter in this music?, In what ways can you alter the music?, What can you add to the music?, How can you embellish the music?, How can you simplify the music? This step may take 1-3 class periods, depending on the age, and comfort level in performing in a chamber group.

Day 6:

10. Students present their music to the class. See PDF for Remix Assessment Rubric.

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