

**Delta State University**

**NEH Landmarks Workshop  
The Most Southern Place on Earth**

***Blues Interactive History Timeline***

**By**

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**Subject/Topic/Unit: US History/Blues/Emergence of American Popular Culture**

**Grade Level: 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> grades**

**I. Main Ideas/Conceptual Understanding/Goals**

Emergence of the Blues as a unique American Art Form/Culture

Connection and Importance of the Blues to the formation of other American musical art forms (i.e. Rock n Roll, R & B, Folk Revival, Hip Hop)

**II. Specific Objectives**

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the history of the Blues and its role in American popular culture in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century through the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Students will demonstrate academic research skills and critical thinking as they make connections between the history of the Blues and other forms of popular music.

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the role that the Blues played on current popular music.

**III. Procedures**

**A. Introduction**

This is a culminating project for students that have had lessons on understanding the Blues and the early history of the Blues. This project can be done as part of a US History class to show the connection of the culture of the South (Delta in particular) and the spread of this culture to the rest of the country.

Using this project, students will have a deeper understanding of the impact that the Blues played on other forms of popular music.

This project can also be used in sociology classes as a study of the importance of music--the Blues--on group and place identity.

This project can be used in popular culture classes to support students understanding of unique American culture.

### **B. Instructions**

Students will be in groups creating a *Blues Interactive History Timeline*. Using Microsoft Excel, students will use photographs of Blues musicians, importance places, and events to illustrate their group's topic.

Requirements of the *Blues Interactive History Timeline*:

- 5-7 People, Places, or Events that are instrumental in understanding the Blues (specific to each group's topic)
- For each person, place, or event students must have a photograph that exemplifies the moment
- 5-10 Facts or anecdotes related to each moment/photograph
- The Blues (or other musical genre as related to their topic) song that best represents the moment
- Students will use Excel to place the photos in a document. They will then use the pop up comment feature to have points of interest on the photos and the song.
- Students will place the photos in chronological order with date to create their *Blues Interactive History Timeline*
- Students may also want to add related factual information between the photos to better connect the events

Divide students into Ten Groups. Each group will have a different research focus for their *Blues Interactive History Timeline*.

1. Connection of Gospel to the Blues
2. Field Holler to the Blues History (Origins of the Blues)
3. Blues to Rock n Roll
4. Blues to R & B
5. Women of the Blues
6. Integration of Race
7. Blues to Hip Hop
8. Blues to Folk Revival of the 1960's
9. Delta Blues to Country/Appalachian Blues
10. Blues to British Invasion

Students will research their group's topic. Individual students will produce an annotated bibliography on their own research. The group will be responsible for writing a group

works cited page. The *Blues Interactive History Timeline* will be the culminating group project.

The groups will create a *Blues Interactive History Timeline* using Microsoft Excel. See attached website links and attached example instructions for using Excel in the social studies classroom. Students will typically require 1-2 hours per interactive photo.

#### **D. Follow-up**

Post the *Blues Interactive History Timeline* on a website. Students will review the other nine *Blues Interactive History Timelines*. After reviewing all of the projects individually, student's will chose one timeline (other than their own) and write a reflection comparing and contrasting their own research to what they have learned on their other timeline.

#### **IV. Materials/Resources**

- Computer Lab with Microsoft Excel
- Excel Interactive Graphic Instructions
- Internet Access

#### **Teaching Resources**

- Articles and Books
  - Cobb, C. E., Jr. (1999). Traveling the blues highway. *National Geographic*, 195(4), 14p. Retrieved May 12, 2008, from <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/9904/fngm>
  - Norris, R. (Ed.). (2008). *Highway 61:Heart of the Delta*. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press.
  - Ferris, William. *Blues of the Delta*
  - Erlewine, Michael. *All Music Guide to the Blues*
  - Garon, Paul and Beth. *Woman With Guitar: Memphis Minnie's Blues*
- Websites
  - <http://www.msbluestrail.org/links.html> (Mississippi Blues Commission with links to Blues Festivals, the Blues Trail, Blues museums, and other information)
  - <http://www.nps.gov/history/DELTA/BLUES/index.htm> (Trail of the Hellhound: Delta Blues in the Lower Mississippi Valley)
  - <http://www.blueshighway.org/> (Delta State University Delta Center for Culture and Learning)
  - <http://www.bluesfestivalguide.com/> (Lists national and international Blues festivals)
  - <http://www.visitthedelta.com/> (Mississippi Delta Tourism Association)
  - [www.folkstream.net](http://www.folkstream.net)
  - [pbs.org/theblues](http://pbs.org/theblues)

- <http://www.folkways.si.edu/>
- [bluesandjazz.net/discographylinks.html](http://bluesandjazz.net/discographylinks.html)
- [www.blues.org](http://www.blues.org)
- Documentaries
  - PBS “The Blues” Film Series
  - “Chicago Blues”
  - “Deep Blues”
  - “The Land Where Blues Began”
  - “Legend of Country Blues Guitar”
  - “St. Louis Blues”
  - “Eric Clapton: Crossroads Guitar Festival” (2004)
- Excel Instructions and Helpful Links
  - [www.dcet.k12.de.us/vault/vault2007/interactivepicmakerstudenthandoutgreen.pdf](http://www.dcet.k12.de.us/vault/vault2007/interactivepicmakerstudenthandoutgreen.pdf) (This PDF has simple student instructions with diagrams on creating an interactive picture on Excel. Highly recommended to print and give these instructions to students)
  - <http://www.rapides.k12.la.us/chapmanm/EXCEL%20with%20Interactive%20Maps.htm>
  - <http://blogs.techrepublic.com.com/msoffice/?p=717>
  - <http://hubpages.com/hub/Create-a-Popup-Picture-in-Excel>
  - [http://www.ideabook.com/tutorials/illustrations/every\\_picture\\_tells\\_a\\_story\\_us.html](http://www.ideabook.com/tutorials/illustrations/every_picture_tells_a_story_us.html)
  - <http://www.brighthub.com/office/home/articles/4850.aspx>

## V. Evaluation related to objectives

The *Blues Interactive History Timeline* will reflect historical accuracy and well-rounded academic research.

Students must demonstrate a convincing argument on the importance of their 5-7 chosen photographs and the events/people/places they reflect.

The annotated bibliography must be in the proper format and uses appropriate and valid academic resources.

The group works cited page is in the proper format and all of the written information on the *Blues Interactive History Timeline* is cited.

The individual reflection demonstrates the student’s knowledge and critical thinking about the history of the Blues and the various genres, people, places, and events that the Blues has affected in American history and popular culture.