HOT Season for Young People
2014-15
Teacher Guidebook

HANGIN' WITH THE GIANTS
JAZZREACH’S METTA QUINTET

Photo by Matt Ziegler

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Thank you, teachers, for giving your students this wonderful opportunity. They will certainly enjoy the experience. You are creating memories of a lifetime, and Regions is proud to be able to help make this opportunity possible.

Jim Schmitz  
Executive Vice President, Area Executive  
Middle Tennessee Area
Dear Teachers,

We are thrilled you are bringing students to JazzReach’s Hangin’ with the Giants to share this music with your students. You will find many learning connections to this wholly American art form.

We encourage you to explore more “Giants” of jazz through the many excellent sites on the web, including www.pbs.org/jazz and www.smithsonianjazz.org. And let your girls know there were women involved in jazz, too.

The performance is highly accessible, and this guidebook was written to include activities easily led by non-musicians, but all can be adapted and expanded by music teachers as well.

Enjoy the show!

TPAC Education

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Guidebook compiled and written by Lattie Brown

Below: Duke Ellington with his orchestra
Hangin’ with the Giants is a fun, high-energy program designed to promote the inclusiveness and accessibility of jazz while highlighting the legacies and music of some of the art form’s central contributors.

Staged as a late night talk show, Hangin’ with the Giants features animated likenesses of jazz greats, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis and Thelonious Monk as show guests, and offers numerous opportunities for students to interact and participate.

Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Miles Davis and Thelonious Monk

JazzReach

Established in 1994, JazzReach is a nationally recognized New York City-based 501(c) (3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to the promotion, performance, creation and teaching of jazz music. All of JazzReach’s artistic programming is carried out exclusively by the organization’s critically acclaimed resident ensemble, METTA QUINTET.

Through the presentation of innovative, widely acclaimed live multi-media educational programs for young audiences, captivating main-stage concerts for general audiences, and informative clinics and master-classes for student musicians and ensembles, JazzReach is steadfastly dedicated to fostering a greater appreciation, awareness and understanding of this rich, vital, ever-evolving American art form.

Since premiering our debut educational program in 1997, JazzReach has successfully positioned itself as one of our nation’s leading arts organizations dedicated to jazz. Our dynamic, innovative programs have triumphantly served over 255,000 young people nationwide in partnership with many of America’s most prominent performing arts presenters and have received unanimous praise from students, teachers, parents, the media and arts professionals alike.
About the show

METTA QUINTET - THE PLAYERS AND THEIR INSTRUMENTS

Ask students:
What does “Giants” mean?

The musicians interviewed in this show made fundamental contributions to the development and progression of jazz. Who are the “giants” in other areas of the arts, of science, of sports? For pre-K and K, heroes may be the easiest synonym to understand.

Ask students:
Can you play the same song with different instruments?

METTA QUINTET shares some instruments with the giants, but some are different. This show does not include any “giants” who played bass or drums, but their performances and recordings always included these instruments. Three of the jazz giants played trumpet, but METTA QUINTET does not have a trumpet player. The trumpet parts easily transfer to the saxophones.

Play list choices:
The band will choose different pieces each day.

Armstrong: “St. Louis Blues” or “Potato Head Blues”

Ellington: “Perdido” or “Things Ain’t What They Used To Be”

Parker and Gillespie: “Salt Peanuts” or “Now’s the Time”

Davis: “Gingerbread Boy,” “No Blues,” or “Jean Pierre”

Monk: “Friday the Thirteenth” or “Little Rootie Tootie”
Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington was born in Washington, DC in 1899. His parents loved music, and he started piano lessons when he was seven. He began forming his own bands when he was eighteen, and soon progressed to leading a jazz orchestra that toured all over the United States and Europe. Not only was he a jazz piano player, but a composer as well incorporating many early styles of music such as ragtime, Tin Pan Alley tunes, and blues into his work. He wrote more than 2000 compositions during his fifty-seven year career, and he is considered one of the greatest musicians of the Twentieth Century. Some of his famous songs include “Sophisticated Lady,” “In A Sentimental Mood,” “I Got It Bad (And That Ain’t Good),” “Don’t Get Around Much Anymore,” “Take the ‘A’ Train,” “Do Nothin’ Till You Hear From Me,” “Satin Doll” and “The Mooche.” He received many awards including the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1969.

Louis Armstrong—“Satchmo” or “Pops” was born in 1901 in New Orleans. He grew up doing odd jobs and singing on street corners to help support his poor family. The rich musical environment inspired him, and he learned to play the cornet and later the trumpet. He began playing and traveling with different bands including ones that traveled on riverboats up and down the Mississippi. His career took off due to his virtuoso improvisational ability, as well as his great style and presence as a performer. He made thousands of recordings over fifty years, as well as starring in Broadway shows, television and radio programs and over thirty films. Students may recognize his famous vocal recording of “What a Wonderful World,” as well as “A Kiss to Build a Dream On,” “Mack the Knife,” and “When the Saints Go Marching In.” He received many awards including a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award.

Charlie Parker—“Bird” was born in 1920, and after his family moved to Kansas City, Missouri when he was seven, he had his first music lessons in school. He began playing the alto saxophone. He became a professional musician at fifteen and played in small ensembles. He was renowned for his solo improvising on the saxophone, and many jazz players and composers cite him as an important influence. He heard a different way to play jazz and helped develop a type of jazz called “be-bop” in the 1940’s. He died very young at 35. Famous recordings include “‘Round Midnight,” “A Night in Tunisia,” and “Groovin’ High.” He received a National Medal of the Arts in 1989.
John Birks “Dizzy” Gillespie was born in 1917 in Cheraw, South Carolina, the youngest of nine children. He began playing piano at the age of four, but taught himself to play the trumpet which led to a music scholarship at the Laurinburg Institute in North Carolina when he was fifteen. He followed his family to Philadelphia, playing in bands there, and then moved to New York to join the famous Cab Calloway jazz orchestra. He began to experiment more with jazz, adding in more African and Cuban rhythms, as well as Latin-American and Carribbean sounds. He was a main creator of the style called be-bop. He was a leading composer and bandleader, and is well known for the unusual shape of his trumpet and his trademark balloon cheeks while playing. Famous compositions include “A Night in Tunisia,” “Salt Peanuts,” “Groovin’ High,” “Manteca,” and “Anthropology.” He received many awards including the Kennedy Center Honors Award.

Thelonious Sphere Monk was born in 1917 in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, but his parents soon moved the family to New York City. Monk began piano lessons as a young child and soon began winning the weekly amateur contests at the Apollo Theater. He studied at Julliard, but then began playing in Harlem clubs. His piano style was very percussive and his improvisations made dramatic use of pauses and dissonances. His more than seventy compositions including “Straight, No Chaser,” “In Walked Bud,” “Blue Monk,” and “Round Midnight” are some of the most recorded pieces by jazz artists. The Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz was founded to honor Monk by preserving the music to which he dedicated his life. After his death in 2006, he was awarded a special Pulitzer Prize for his contributions to the evolution of jazz.

Miles Dewey Davis was born in 1926 in Alton, Illinois, and grew up in East St. Louis, where his father was a dentist. Miles was given his first trumpet at age thirteen and later attended the Julliard School for a time, but soon left to play professionally with jazz groups in New York. Davis was known as one of the great innovators in jazz. He constantly sought new sounds and arrangements of sound and was at the forefront of many new movements including hard bop, cool jazz, and jazz fusion. His interest in rock music led him to begin incorporating electric instruments into his recordings; so much so that he was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame after his death. Famous work includes the albums The Birth of Cool, Sketches of Spain, Jack Johnson, and Kind of Blue, the quadruple platinum bestselling jazz album of all time. He received many awards including a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award.
Jazz musicians are a team

Ask students what activities they do as a team. Their examples may range from the formal of organized sports to the casual of cooking.

วาด What are the most important things to remember when working as a team?
วาด How does each team member know what to do?
วาด How do you stay together as a group?
วาด What part does communication play in succeeding?
วาด Are there any chances for one person to have a “star turn” even though it’s a team?
วาด Does someone have to be the leader?

Tell students that their answers to these questions are all related to the way musicians play together, particularly jazz musicians. Encourage them to watch and listen for signs that show the teamwork of the METTA QUINTET.

All of our jazz “giants” in this show knew each other in life, and many of them worked together. Playing together requires a important professional commitment to be part of the team, but many of these musicians were great friends over and above their work together.
Interviews about Music

Since *Hangin' with the Giants* was structured as a kind of late-night talk show, interviewing skills provide a strong learning connection for students. Following are three approaches for different age-groups.

**For K**
Ask students to “interview” a parent or guardian at home about their favorite kind of music. Let students practice at school using a pretend microphone. They can use their just their fist or an object, perhaps a hairbrush to imagine a handheld mic. Help them learn a few types of questions to ask to learn more including “why?” and “who?” questions, and a request to listen to an example. Share the different responses over several days, including the examples.

**Grades 1-2**
Repeat the activity above, but add more planning about types of effective questions to get interviewees to expand their stories (open-ended versus closed questions). Students may also create a specific interviewer character, complete with altered voice and demeanor to report back to the class. Learning about the musical preferences of the students’ parents or guardians may also include finding library books for young people that explore a genre of music or, more commonly, a famous musician in that genre.

**Grades 3-4**
The activities above may be used for this age group as well, but another option pairs students in class to interview each other about their experience so far with music. The aim is to find out stories about the first time they remember music, who a favorite artist is, how they feel about music used in movies, whether they have tried a musical instrument, or if anyone in their family works in music. Help students to plan successful questions that aid their interview. Explore questions and behavior that make an interview unsuccessful. Ask students to write a few paragraphs to detail what they learned from their partner. Look also at Doug Lipman’s excellent article on interview games here:www.storydynamics.com/Articles/Education/interviewing.html

Nickname Discussion

Jazz musicians seem to have a tendency to acquire nicknames, many that are widely used by the public. Discuss the best use of nicknames: when they include a compliment or acknowledgement of a person’s skill or personality, or when they refer to a positive memory or event. This use of nicknames provides an alternative to a negative and bullying use.

- Duke Ellington’s nickname came early from friends for his grace, manner of dress, and his “noble” bearing. He liked it and kept it all his life as his professional name.
- Louis Armstrong’s nickname, “Satchmo,” came from a shortening of “Satchel Mouth.” It could have been a negative, but it referred to the effect that his extraordinarily large mouth had on his trumpet playing. It was a compliment, and he even chose to use it in the title of one of his autobiographies.
- Dizzy Gillespie’s nickname come from his own behavior. He was known for over-the-top antics.
- The origin of Charlie Parker’s nickname “Bird” is disputed, but he liked it and he referenced it in many pieces of his music.
Clapping on 2 and 4

One of the reasons jazz feels and moves the way it does is the placement of stresses or accents. Jazz music includes all different types of rhythms with different musical counts, but a lot of standard jazz music is written in groups or measures of four counts, called 4/4 time. A short experiment with basic songs in 4/4 time will help students get a feel for the elemental movement of jazz music, the swing.

Some music puts the strongest stress on the downbeat, first beat of the group or the measure, but jazz generally puts the stress on beat number two, after the downbeat. It makes the music feel entirely different, just as the pronunciation of a word changes how it sounds if the stress is placed on a different syllable.

Try a simple clapping activity with students. Listen to the difference when you clap on different beats to *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*. While singing, first clap on the underlined syllables, the first (downbeat) and third beats of the group of four:

```
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!
```

Now ask students to listen to the difference in the feel of the song when they clap on the “jazz beats” the second and fourth beats while singing. Don’t forget that the words at the end of the lines: star, are, high, and sky are held for two beats, so the clap comes right after you start to sing these words.

```
Twinkle, twinkle, little star, __
How I wonder what you are! __
Up above the world so high, __
Like a diamond in the sky. __
Twinkle, twinkle, little star, __
How I wonder what you are! __
```

This second way of clapping, on the “two and four” may take a few practices. Make sure students are singing the song in the regular way, not trying to change the word stresses to go along with the claps. They need to stick with TWIN-kle, TWIN-kle, not Twin-KLE, twin-KLE! Try together to describe the difference between the two methods.

For older students, try this activity with other basic children’s songs. *The Itsy-Bitsy Spider, Rain, Rain, Go Away* work well as do *Row, Row, Row Your Boat* and *London Bridge* even though these last two are written in 2/4 time. *The Ants Go Marching Two by Two* is much harder as it is a march, and leans more strongly towards a “one and three” stress, but it can be done.
TPAC Education is supported in part by the generous contributions, sponsorships, and in-kind gifts from the following corporations, foundations, government agencies, and other organizations.

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* A fund of The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee