

Lesson Plan for “What They Were Listening To” Podcast Music and Migration in Post-War Germany for Grade 11

Overview

- Grade: **11 German/Canadian History**
- Subject: Music in Post-War Germany
- Duration: 75 minutes

Objectives

- Students will analyze how music reflected hardship, hope, and cultural change in post-war Germany, considering both historical context and emotional impact.
- Students will listen critically to a podcast, identify key themes, historical events, and personal migration stories, and contextualize musical history using classroom discussion and note-taking.
- Students will demonstrate understanding through a short-written reflection, connecting musical examples to broader historical and emotional contexts.
- Students will use a rubric to self-assess and peer-assess their written responses, practicing thoughtful evaluation and feedback.
- Students will have the option to complete extension tasks for deeper analysis, such as researching additional songs or creating a chronological list of musical events.

Materials

- Podcast episode: 'Music and Migration: Post-War Germany's Soundscape and Stories'
[Podbean Link to "What They Were Listening To"](#)
[Spotify Link to "What They Were Listening To"](#)
[Apple Podcasts Link to "What They Were Listening To"](#)
- Use presentation: What They Were Listening To – link forthcoming
- Along with song lyrics such as [Marlene Dietrich's 'Muss i denn'](#).
- Writing materials: notebooks, pens, or digital devices for written reflection, Worksheet for listening to podcast (attached)
- Assessment rubric for the short writing task, outlining criteria for historical insight, personal connection, clarity, and creativity
- Speakers or headphones for clear audio playback, and projector or smartboard for Podcast [Music and Migration: Post-War Germany's Soundscape and Stories](#) multimedia content and song lyrics.

Lesson Outline:

1. Introduction to Music and Migration (8 minutes)

- Begin with a brief discussion on how history can be experienced through music, introducing the concept that songs reflect lived emotions and cultural shifts.
- Present the context of post-war Germany, highlighting the emotional aftermath of WWII and the significance of music in shaping identity and memory.
- Explain the importance of migration, referencing the experiences of German women who immigrated to Canada in the early 1950s and how their stories are captured in the podcast.

- Set learning expectations for the lesson, emphasizing active listening, critical thinking, and personal reflection

2. Podcast Listening and Historical Soundscape (12 minutes)

Ask the students to fill in the worksheet under Materials as they listen along.

- Play selected segments of the podcast, focusing on the collage of WWII sounds and the folk song expressing longing for peace; encourage students to note emotional responses and key details.
- Pause to discuss the significance of swing music as a symbol of liberation after the Nazi regime, and how Allied military radio stations introduced new musical influences.
- Highlight examples of songs that addressed themes of love, longing, and everyday life, such as the 1951 song about swimming in Lake Wannsee, and discuss their cultural relevance.
- Engage students in a brief group activity, asking them to identify musical elements that represent hope, trauma, or change in the audio clips.

3. Personal Narratives and Migration Stories (10 minutes)

- Discuss the urge to emigrate and the emotional impact of farewell songs, such as Marlene Dietrich's 'Muss i denn', linking these to broader migration patterns.
- Facilitate a discussion on how music can express both excitement for new beginnings and sorrow for leaving home, using specific examples from the podcast.
- Encourage students to share their own thoughts or family stories about migration and music, fostering a culturally relevant and personal connection.

4. Writing Reflection (12 minutes)

- Introduce the short writing task: students will reflect on how music in post-war Germany helped people cope with adversity and express hope, using examples from the podcast.
- Allow students time to write their reflections, encouraging them to reference specific songs, interviews, or musical themes discussed in class.
- Present optional extension tasks: students may research additional songs from the era, analyze their lyrics, or create a chronological list of musical events for deeper analysis.

5. Wrap-Up and Interdisciplinary Connections (3 minutes)

- Summarize the key learning points, emphasizing how music can reveal historical and emotional truths about migration and cultural change.
- Invite students to consider how these insights might apply to other historical periods or migration stories, connecting music, history, and personal experience.
- Encourage students to revisit the podcast series for further learning, suggesting ways to explore music's role in their own communities.

- Collect written reflections and provide brief verbal feedback, ensuring students understand the value of critical listening and expressive writing.

Music and Migration in Post-War Germany – Grade 11 Worksheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

Part 1: Pre-Listening

1. How can music reflect historical events or emotions?

2. What do you know about post-WWII Germany or migration?

Part 2: Podcast – What They Were Listening To

1. What sounds or music stood out? What emotions did they represent?

Themes (check and give example): Trauma ___ Hope ___ Change ___ Migration ___

Examples: _____

2. What did you learn about life in post-war Germany?

Part 3: Music and Meaning

1. Why was Swing music important after WWII?

2. What do everyday songs tell us about people's lives?

Part 4: Migration Stories

1. How did music comfort migrants?

2. What emotions are in “Muss i denn”?

3. How can music express sadness and hope at the same time?

Part 5: Written Reflection

How did music help people cope with trauma and express hope?

Part 6: Exit Reflection

What is one new thing you learned?
