



Young Audiences of Massachusetts

Educational Materials

Please forward to teachers

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

George W. Russell Jr. & Co.: *Clap Your Hands*

Grade levels: 3-12

In this program, three singers and three musicians (drummer, bassist, pianist) perform highlights from one of America's most popular musical genres - gospel. The program features everything from Thomas Dorsey's spirituals of the 1930's to the 1960's hit, "Oh Happy Day" by the Edwin Hawkins Singers. The program also includes original songs by George W. Russell, Jr.

The performance demonstrates the rise and function of gospel music in the African-American community and describes gospel's roles as a mental release from bondage, a vehicle for communication on the Underground Railroad, and "common ground" during the Civil Rights Movement. The program also emphasizes the fact that gospel music is played and sung in a variety of styles.

LEARNING GOALS:

1. To provide a chronology of gospel music from spiritual to rock and contemporary pop styles.
2. To explore the social aspects of gospel and demonstrate its impact on American spiritual and popular music.

PRE-ACTIVITY SUMMARY: *Civil Rights Timeline*

Discuss the Civil Rights Movement. Create a timeline with events from the 1850s to the present day. Have groups of students select events and write, illustrate, or present descriptions of them to the class. Integrate students' projects into this timeline, and display it in a prominent location in the classroom or school building.

POST-ACTIVITY SUMMARY: *Understanding Cultures*

Discuss the meaning of culture using a "bubble chart" as an illustrative tool. Discuss aspects of the African-American culture that were highlighted in the **Clap Your Hands** performance. Ask students about their own cultures. Have students ask their families about their cultural roots so they can share their cultural histories with the class.

CURRICULUM LINKS:

African-American Studies, History and Social Sciences, Music, Multicultural Studies

PRE-ACTIVITY: CIVIL RIGHTS TIMELINE

LEARNING GOAL:

To study the history of the Civil Rights Movement.

MATERIALS/PREPARATION:

Long paper (from a roll), art supplies, books about the Civil Rights Movement.

TIME:

Two 45 minute classes.

STEP 1:

Discuss the Civil Rights Movement in American history (Underground Railroad, Emancipation Proclamation, 15th Amendment, Jim Crow laws, Voting Rights Act, etc.).

STEP 2:

Create a timeline of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1850s to present day. Transcribe this information onto the long paper.

STEP 3:

Divide the class into small groups. Have each group choose a certain date/event from the timeline.

STEP 4:

Have the students work together to write and illustrate a report or create an audio recording about their event. Students may use other media as well. Allow students the remainder of the first class and about half of the second class to work on their projects.

STEP 5:

Have groups share their "piece" of the timeline with the class. Integrate each "piece" into the timeline so that the final product will be an innovative and creative representation of the Civil Rights Movement.

EXTENSIONS:

- 1) Have students watch selections from the PBS documentary *Eyes on the Prize*.
- 2) **Have** students write a review of the **Clap Your Hands** performance.



POST-ACTIVITY: UNDERSTANDING CULTURES

LEARNING GOAL:

To understand the concept of "culture" and encourage students to learn about their own cultures.

MATERIALS/PREPARATION:

Magazines, photos, objects that students bring in from home.

TIME:

Two 45 minutes classes.

TIPS FOR THE TEACHER:

* If making a collage is not feasible, have students share what they have learned about their cultural roots with the class.

STEP 1:

Discuss the word "culture." What does it mean? Using a bubble chart, ask students to share any words or comments that relate to the concept of culture.

STEP 2:

Discuss the **Clap Your Hands** performance. Using the bubble chart as a reference, talk about the various aspects of African-American culture presented in the program.

STEP 3:

Ask students about their own heritages and cultures. Have them share some of their family customs.

STEP 4:

Have students ask their parents and grandparents about their cultural roots. Have them think about the "culture" that they have created for themselves, such as the music they listen to, the food they like to eat, etc.

STEP 5:

Have students create collages that represent their cultures using photos, objects, drawings, etc. Have them share their culture collages.

EXTENSIONS:

- 1) **Have** students research the lives of leading gospel musicians (i.e. Thomas Dorsey, Reverend James Cleveland, Mahalia Jackson, Sallie Martin, The Wynans, etc.).
- 2) Have students listen to different types of music (i.e., pop, jazz, religious, hip-hop, blues, etc.) and discuss its cultural impact.



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RESOURCES:

Broughton, Viv. [Black Gospel: An Illustrated History of the Gospel Sound.](#)

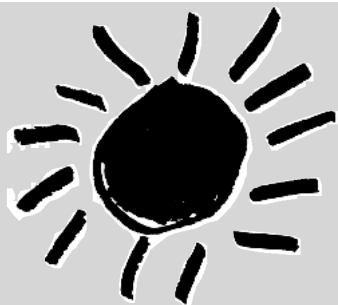
Higgensen, Vy. [This is My Song: A Collection of Gospel Music for the Family.](#)

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS:

George W. Russell, Jr. is a native of Pittsburgh, PA. He attended Duquesne University and received a B.S. in Music Education in 1988. He continued his studies in Boston at the New England Conservatory of Music, receiving a Masters degree in Jazz Studies. George Russell resides with his wife and three children in Boston, MA where he is highly esteemed and sought after as a gospel and jazz pianist. He is the former Minister of Music/ Chief Musician at Jubilee (formerly known as New Covenant) Christian Church in Boston. He is Associate Professor of Harmony at Berklee College of Music. George is also a recording artist, with a total of eight jazz and gospel recordings to his credit. **Wannetta Jackson**, a native of Milwaukee, studied at the Berklee College of Music. She is well known on the club scene, as well as in Boston Globe Jazz Festivals, Dimmock Commends Health Center's annual "Steppin' Out" Gala, and her own shows such as "Sisters Soul to Soul: Wannetta Jackson Sings Aretha Franklin." **Sean Skeete** is an ensemble instructor and drum instructor at the Berklee College of Music. He is the consummate, professional drummer. He is a free-lance drummer in the Boston area. Sean also plays with the George W. Russell, Jr. Trio. **Wesley Wirth**, originally from Sherborn, Massachusetts, is a bassist and graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music. He has two Masters degrees from Harvard University: Architectural Landscaping and Problem Solving. Wesley has performed with Bob Moses, Semanya McCord, Chuck Mangioni, Stan Strickland, just to name a few. He currently plays with the George W. Russell, Jr. Trio as well as with many other artists in the area. **Emily Russell**, a Pennsylvania native, is a pianist and singer/songwriter, and has written many children's songs. She also runs her own fine art/graphic design business, "Studio E" and is President/Manager of G Dub Music. For more information on George W. Russell Jr. & Co., please consult the web site at: <http://www.georgewrusselljr.com>.

ABOUT YOUNG AUDIENCES:

Young Audiences of Massachusetts (YA) is the oldest, largest and most utilized arts-in-education organization in the state and one of the largest in a national network of 33 chapters. For over 45 years, YA has distinguished itself as the vital link between Massachusetts schoolchildren (K-12) and more than 95 of the region's most accomplished actors, dancers, singers, musicians, and storytellers. Its 36 ensembles offer 57 interactive arts programs that represent a range of cultures, historical periods and artistic disciplines. YA is unique in its flexibility to offer interactive performances, tailor-made residencies, workshops, teacher-training, curriculum planning and multi-year projects. All programs include educational materials and satisfy local, state and/or federal arts education standards.



Young Audiences of Massachusetts

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MASSACHUSETTS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS CONNECTIONS

George W. Russell Jr. & Co., *Clap Your Hands*

<i>Language Arts 9</i>	...identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read, heard, or viewed.
<i>History 4</i>	Society, Diversity, Commonality, and the Individual...learn the complex interplay that has existed from the beginning of our country between American ideals and American practice.
<i>World Language 19</i>	...examine and analyze cultural contributions of diverse groups.
<i>Arts-Music 1</i>	Singing...sing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
<i>Arts-Music 5</i>	Critical Response...describe and analyze their own music and the music of others using appropriate music vocabulary.
<i>Arts-Music 6</i>	Purpose and Meaning in the Arts...describe the purpose for which works of dance, music, theatre, visual arts, and architecture were and are created.
<i>Arts-Music 8</i>	Concepts of Style, Stylistic Influence, and Stylistic Change...demonstrate understanding of styles, influence, change.
<i>Arts-Music 10</i>	Interdisciplinary Connections...apply knowledge of the arts to the study of English language arts, foreign languages, health, history, and social science, mathematics, and science and technology/engineering.

