



## ***Jazz In America: The National Jazz Curriculum***

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### **Lesson Plan #6 - Cool, Hard Bop, and Modal Jazz**

- TOPIC:
1. Cool: 1949 - 1955<sup>1</sup>
  2. Hard Bop and "Funky" Jazz:<sup>2</sup> 1951-1958
  3. Important Figures
  4. Cultural Implications

STANDARDS:

#### **National Standards for United States History (Grades 9-12)<sup>3</sup>**

##### Historical Thinking

Students should be able to:

1. draw upon visual, literary, and musical sources. (Historical Comprehension Standard 2g)
2. compare and contrast differing sets of ideas, values, personalities, behaviors, and institutions (Historical Analysis and Interpretation Standard 3b)
3. consider multiple perspectives (Historical Research Capabilities Standard 3d)
4. hypothesize the influence of the past (Historical Analysis and Interpretation Standard 3j)
5. obtain historical data (Historical Research Capabilities Standard 4b)

##### Historical Content (Contemporary United States)

Students should be able to:

1. demonstrate understanding of the extent and impact of economic changes in the postwar period (Postwar United States, 1945 to Early 1970s, Standard 1a)
2. demonstrate understanding of how the social changes of the postwar period affected various Americans (Postwar United States, 1945 to Early 1970s, Standard 1b)
3. demonstrate understanding of how diverse peoples and their cultures have shaped American life (Major Social and Economic Development in Contemporary America Standard 2a)
4. demonstrate understanding of contemporary American culture (Major Social and Economic Development in Contemporary America Standard 2e)

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<sup>1</sup> All styles of jazz from Dixieland to contemporary are still being performed and recorded today; all style dates given are the approximations of when each respective style came to the forefront of jazz and experienced its most concentrated development; of course, styles and dates overlap.

<sup>2</sup> The term "Funky Jazz" in the 1950s should not be confused with "Funk," a style of popular music pioneered in the 1970s. Funky Jazz is characterized by its earthy, "low down," soulful, bluesy, and gospel flavored qualities, e.g., Moanin', Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers (IHJ). While Funk also combines elements of jazz, blues, and soul, it is characterized by syncopated rock rhythms and a heavy, repetitive bass line, e.g., Chameleon, Herbie Hancock (Web).

<sup>3</sup> National Center for History in the Schools, UCLA

**National Standards for Arts Education (Music Grades 9-12)<sup>4</sup>**

Content Standard #6 - Listening to, Analyzing, and Describing Music

Students:

- a. analyze aural examples of a varied repertoire of music, representing diverse genres and cultures, by describing the uses of elements of music and expressive devices
- b. demonstrate extensive knowledge of the technical vocabulary of music
- c. identify and explain compositional devices and techniques used to provide unity and variety and tension and release in a musical work and give examples of other works that make similar uses of these devices and techniques
- d. demonstrate the ability to perceive and remember music events by describing in detail significant events occurring in a given aural example
- e. compare ways in which musical materials are used in a given example relative to ways in which they are used in other works of the same genre or style
- f. analyze and describe uses of the elements of music in a given work that make it unique, interesting, and expressive

Content Standard #9 - Understanding Music in Relation to History and Culture

Students:

- a. classify by genre or style and by historical period or culture unfamiliar but representative aural examples of music and explain the reasoning behind their classifications
- b. identify sources of American music genres, trace the evolution of those genres, and cite well-known musicians associated with them
- c. identify various roles that musicians perform, cite representative individuals who have functioned in each role, and describe their activities and achievements
- d. identify and explain the stylistic features of a given musical work that serve to define its aesthetic tradition and its historical or cultural context.
- e. identify and describe music genres or styles that show the influence of two or more cultural traditions, identify the cultural source of each influence, and trace the historical conditions that produced the synthesis of influences

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<sup>4</sup> MENC: The National Association for Music Education

**SESSION OBJECTIVES:**

The student will:

1. gain a fundamental understanding of Cool Jazz
  - a. reaction to bebop
  - b. performance practices
2. gain a fundamental understanding of Hard Bop and Funky Jazz
  - a. reaction to cool
  - b. performance practices
3. gain a fundamental understanding of Modal Jazz
  - a. reaction to hard bop and cool
  - b. performance practices
4. learn the basic definition of several terms associated with jazz
  - a. contrafact
  - b. dynamics
  - c. homophony
  - d. mode
  - e. nonet
  - f. polyphony
5. listen to Cool, Hard Bop, Funky Jazz, and Modal Jazz recordings
6. become acquainted with Miles Davis and Art Blakey
7. participate in a class discussion regarding jazz's contribution to and reflection of American culture in the 1950s

**EQUIPMENT:**

1. CD player
2. chalkboard (with chalk and eraser)
3. overhead projector (optional)
4. computer logged onto [www.jazzinamerica.org](http://www.jazzinamerica.org) (optional)

**MATERIALS:**

1. The Instrumental History of Jazz
  - a. two CDs
  - b. accompanying booklet
2. Student Handouts (one per student)<sup>5</sup>
  - a. chapter glossary
  - b. one American History (AH) handout: *The 1950s: A Decade of Change*
  - c. Cool Characteristics
  - d. Hard Bop and Funky Jazz Characteristics
  - e. Modal Jazz Characteristics
  - f. time line (1950s)
  - g. Jazz Biographies (JB) handout (Miles Davis and Art Blakey)
3. Overhead projector transparencies<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Student handouts may be down loaded from the Jazz in America website ([www.jazzinamerica.org](http://www.jazzinamerica.org)), printed, and photocopied.

<sup>6</sup> Any material from the Jazz in America website ([www.jazzinamerica.org](http://www.jazzinamerica.org)) may be down loaded, printed, and made into a

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

The instructor will:

1. distribute student handouts
2. have students read and discuss the student handout, *The 1950s: A Decade of Change*
3. discuss Cool, Hard Bop and Funky Jazz, and Modal Jazz
4. examine the biographical sketches of Miles Davis and Art Blakey
5. play significant Cool recordings: *Boplicity*, Miles Davis (IHJ), and/or *Bernie's Tune*, Gerry Mulligan Quartet (IHJ), and/or *Take Five*, Dave Brubeck (Web)<sup>7</sup>
6. play significant Hard Bop recordings: *Nica's Dream*, Horace Silver Quintet (IHJ), and/or *Walkin'*, Miles Davis (Web), and/or *St. Thomas*, Sonny Rollins (Web), and/or *Giant Steps*, John Coltrane (Web)
7. play significant Funky Jazz recordings: *Moanin'*, Art Blakey & The Jazz Messengers (IHJ) and/or *Song for My Father*, Horace Silver (Web)
8. play significant Modal Jazz recordings: *Impressions*, John Coltrane (IHJ), and/or *All Blues*, Miles Davis (Web), and/or *Footprints*, Miles Davis (Web)
9. lead a class discussion regarding jazz's contribution to and reflection of American culture during the Cool, Hard Bop, and Modal Eras

ASSESSMENT: Test Bank

1. Multiple Choice
2. Fill in the Blank
3. True-False
4. Matching
5. Essay

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transparency as the instructor sees fit.

<sup>7</sup> "IHJ" = selection is found on Willie Hill's *The Instrumental History of Jazz*; "Web" = selection is found on the Jazz in America website ([www.jazzinamerica.org](http://www.jazzinamerica.org))

## OUTLINE

### I. Cool (1949-1955)<sup>8</sup>

#### A. Reaction to Bebop

1. if Bebop was a reaction to Swing, then Cool was a reaction to the reaction
  - a. Bebop was a fast-paced, energetic, raw emotional, loud, "hot" style of jazz
  - b. Cool was usually a slower paced, more subdued, less emotional, softer, more controlled, "cooler" style of jazz
2. Cool re-popularized jazz and pulled it back into the mainstream of America
3. while Cool jazz was performed by both black and white musicians in all major cities, it has been most closely associated with young white players (e.g., baritone saxophonist Gerry Mulligan, trumpet player Chet Baker, pianist Dave Brubeck, alto saxophonist Paul Desmond) on the West Coast (i.e., Los Angeles and San Francisco); highly significant east coast black Cool innovators included trumpet player Miles Davis and pianist John Lewis
4. the size of the Cool groups were more varied than their Bebop counterparts
  - a. Bebop combos usually ranged from quartets to sextets
  - b. Cool combos ranged from trios (three members) to nonets (nine members)
5. the instrumentation of the Cool groups were more varied than their Bebop counterparts
  - a. Bebop combos usually consisted of trumpet, saxophone, piano, bass, and drums
  - b. besides the standard Bebop instrumentation, Cool combos often included softer, more "classical" instruments, e.g., flute, oboe, clarinet, French horn, flugelhorn, vibes, tuba, guitar, etc.)
6. Cool influences and tune sources included swing, bebop, pop, and classical music

#### B. Performance Practices

1. written arrangements
2. use of polyphony
  - a. Bebop employed more homophony, i.e., one melodic line (the soloist) with accompanying chords (the pianist) underneath
  - b. besides homophony, Cool often employed polyphony, i.e., two or more independent melodic lines sounded together
3. integration of arrangement and improvisation; both were important
4. rhythm sections were basically passive, providing subtle accompaniment
5. the dynamic range (i.e., soft to loud), as well as the emotionally expressive range, was usually more narrow in Cool than in Bebop
6. Cool utilized the basic musical language of Bebop, but more simplified; the use of the blues was minimized (more classical influence than blues influence)
7. compared to Bebop, Cool jazz was more "tune oriented," i.e., more singable, easy, narrow range, simple rhythms

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<sup>8</sup> All styles of jazz from Dixieland to contemporary are still being performed and recorded today; all style dates given are the approximations of when each respective style came to the forefront of jazz and experienced its most concentrated development; of course, styles and dates overlap.

C. Important Figures

1. Chet Baker, trumpet (1929-1988)
  2. Dave Brubeck, piano (b. 1920)
  3. Miles Davis, trumpet (1926-1991)
  4. Modern Jazz Quartet (John Lewis, piano; Milt Jackson, vibes, Percy Heath, bass, Connie Kay, drums)
  5. Gerry Mulligan, baritone saxophone (1927-1996)
- D. Play *Boplicity*, Miles Davis (IHJ), and/or *Bernie's Tune*, Gerry Mulligan Quartet (IHJ), and/or *TakeFive*, Dave Brubeck (Web)<sup>9</sup>

II. Hard Bop (1951-1958)<sup>10</sup>

A. Reaction to Cool

1. if Bebop was a reaction to Swing, and Cool was a reaction to the reaction, then Hard Bop may have been a reaction to the reaction of the reaction
  - a. Cool was generally a slow paced, subdued, less emotional, soft, controlled, "cool" style of jazz
  - b. Hard Bop represented a return to the fast-paced, emotionally charged, energetic, "hot" style of bebop but with more sophistication and control
2. Hard Bop was heavily dominated by young African Americans disenchanted with Cool's white domination, de-emphasis of the blues, and sublimation of the emotional and rhythmic components of the music
3. Hard Bop was centered mainly in Northern cities with a large black population, i.e., New York, Chicago, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Indianapolis

B. Hard Bop and Funky - two distinct substyles:

1. shared characteristics between the two substyles:
  - a. both came out of bebop
  - b. many of the same artists were active and important in both (e.g., Horace Silver, Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, Cannonball Adderley)
  - c. both display the successful integration of composition, arrangement, and improvisation
  - d. the instrumentation was generally two or three horns plus rhythm section (piano and/or guitar, bass, and drums); however, trios and quartets performed in this genre as well
  - e. groups came to prominence on the labels of small independent record companies that surfaced in the late 1940s and '50s, e.g., Prestige, Blue Note, and Savoy

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<sup>10</sup> All styles of jazz from Dixieland to contemporary are still being performed and recorded today; all style dates given are the approximations of when each respective style came to the forefront of jazz and experienced its most concentrated development; of course, styles and dates overlap.

2. differences between the two substyles
    - a. Tune Sources
      - i. Hard Bop: blues, standards, bebop tunes, originals, and contrafacts<sup>11</sup>
      - ii. Funky: more limited than in hard bop; most funky jazz tunes were extant blues tunes or original compositions heavily blues and/or gospel influenced
    - b. Forms<sup>12</sup>
      - i. Hard Bop: often unorthodox, varied, and complex
      - ii. Funky: simple (e.g., 12-bar blues, 16 bar tune, etc.)
    - c. Harmony<sup>13</sup>
      - i. Hard Bop: often complex and unorthodox
      - ii. Funky: simple harmonies (often just two or three chords)
    - d. Melody
      - i. Hard Bop: heads and solos often employed complex scales
      - ii. Funky: heads and solos utilized simple scales, mostly related to the blues
    - e. Rhythm
      - i. Hard Bop: sophisticated and subtle
      - ii. Funky: simple and explicitly stated (strong influence of gospel and R&B)
    - f. Sophistication
      - i. Hard Bop: cerebral (however, not void of emotion)
      - ii. Funky: "earthy," "down-home"
- C. Important Figures
1. Cannonball Adderley, alto sax (1928-1975)
  2. Art Blakey, drums (1919-1990)
  3. John Coltrane, tenor saxophone (1926-1967)
  4. Miles Davis, trumpet (1926-1991)
  5. Barry Harris, piano, (b. 1929)
  6. Jimmy Heath, tenor saxophone (b. 1926)
  7. The Jazz Messengers (groups led by Art Blakey)
  8. Sonny Rollins, tenor saxophone (b. 1930)
  9. Horace Silver, piano (b. 1928)
- D. Play recordings:
1. Hard Bop: *Nica's Dream*, Horace Silver Quintet (IHJ), and/or *Walkin'*, Miles Davis (Web), and/or *St. Thomas*, Sonny Rollins (Web), and/or *Giant Steps*, John Coltrane (Web)
  2. Funky: *Moanin'*, Art Blakey & The Jazz Messengers (IHJ) and/or *Song for My Father*, Horace Silver (Web)

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<sup>11</sup> *contrafact*: complex bebop tune written utilizing the same chord progression as an extant standard tune

<sup>12</sup> see discussion on Form in Lesson Plan II

<sup>13</sup> see discussion on Harmony in Lesson Plan II

### III. Modal Jazz

- A. an outgrowth of Cool and Hard Bop and a precursor to the imminent Free Jazz movement (see Lesson Plan 7) was Modal Jazz, that is, jazz based on a limited number of modes (particular musical scales), as opposed to a progression of changing chords
- B. several avid hard bop players (e.g. John Coltrane), after struggling with drug addiction and experiencing spiritual rebirth, focused on modal playing, concentrating on agitated rhythms and distorted timbres as opposed to "making the changes" (i.e., having their improvised notes "fit" the chords); without having to be concerned with chord progressions, modal jazz musicians were freer to concentrate more on emotional content
- C. the first important Modal Jazz recording was Miles Davis' 1959 release *Kind of Blue*; it featured simple melodies and modal harmony, reflecting both cool emotion and hard edge haunted Hard Bop timbres
- D. Important Figures
  1. John Coltrane, tenor saxophone (1926-1967)
  2. Miles Davis, trumpet (1926-1991)
  3. George Russell, piano (b. 1923)
- E. Play *Impressions*, John Coltrane (IHJ), and/or *All Blues*, Miles Davis (Web), and/or *Footprints*, Miles Davis (Web)

### IV. Cultural Implications

- A. Cool
  1. post World War II showed a shift in American attitudes stimulated by both a new found affluence in the 1950s and uncertainty in the future
  2. Cool jazz reflected (and contributed to) a subdued emotion and quiet intellectual control that had become valued in American society
    - a. "keeping cool" was an expression of emotional self control in time of crisis found in American street slang as well in the language of army test pilots
    - b. after many labor strikes, Congress passed the Taft-Hartley Act mandating a "cooling off period" in labor disputes
    - c. "firm and patient" measures were discussed by politicians and diplomats regarding the United States' relationship with the Soviet Union
    - d. fictional heroes like James Bond and Mike Hammer remained impassive while the world exploded around them
    - e. America's top choice of entertainment had "cooled down" from the nightclubs, dancehalls, amusement parks, vaudeville, etc. of prior generations to television featuring shows about simple suburban life (e.g., *The Donna Reed Show*)
  3. due to the new found weapons of mass destruction (e.g., atomic bomb), cool thinking was required at this crucial point in history
  4. California
    - a. the California image of casual, laid back white suburbia was the perfect backdrop and breeding ground for cool jazz
    - b. cool jazz represented the increasing importance of California to American society and culture

**B. Hard Bop**

1. disenchanted with the white domination of Cool jazz and its European classical music influences, many African American jazz musicians went in the opposite direction of Cool jazz, playing even harder driving bebop
2. perhaps the key feature of hard bop was its militantly African American identity
  - a. hard bop was a means of expression and reaction from young African American men to demonstrate their dissatisfaction and anger toward the social, political, and economic climate of America at that time, i.e., segregation and lack of economic equity
  - b. in this era of civil right activism, many African American musicians reflected their protest through hard bop jazz
3. besides more drive, complexity, and control, Hard Bop added more "soul" to bebop, that is, additional elements of traditional and popular African American music including blues, rhythm and blues (R&B), and black gospel music; the music was undeniably Afro-centric
4. New York
  - a. hard bop reflected the fast-paced, driving, complex New York lifestyle
  - b. as in all major northern cities, New York experienced an increasing African American population, making it an ideal backdrop and breeding ground for Hard Bop
5. Hard Bop is currently enjoying a resurgence and is the main influence behind today's young "straight ahead" players; it is the mainstay of today's jam sessions

**C. Modal Jazz**

1. modal playing was, in part, a rejection of European chord progressions, creating a path toward an even more Afrocentric American music
2. Modal Jazz was among the many cultural indicators of the impact of the black revolution for civil rights
3. coming at a time of increasing inner city anger and a civil rights revolution (as well as from a nation dealing with a cold war mentality), modal jazz was one of the many indicators of the explosive cultural and musical developments to come in the approaching decades
4. while many jazz musicians were still struggling with drug abuse, there was a general shifting away from drugs towards Afrocentric forms of spirituality