

Estoy Aquí: Music of the Chicano Movement:

A Smithsonian Folkways Music Pathway for students in grades 6–8.



Teacher's Guide

Lesson Hub 1:

What Is Chicana/o?

Exploring Cultural Identity through Music

Lesson Overview

Chicana/o is a term that gained popularity in the late 1960s and early 1970s during a period we now call the Chicano movement. In some cases, the term Chicana/o is used very generally to describe people of Mexican heritage living in the United States. However, the term's true meaning is much more complex and deeply personal (it means different things to different people). People of Mexican heritage who live in the US sometimes use the term Chicana/o to express the pride they feel about this part of their cultural identity.

The Chicano movement (sometimes called the Mexican American civil rights movement or *El Movimiento*) can be understood as a collective response to issues of discrimination, oppression, exploitation, and injustices faced by the Mexican American community. The primary goal of the Chicano movement was to “create a more just and equitable society” (Montoya, 2016, p. xiii). During this time (roughly the late 1960s-1970s), people developed deeper awareness of past oppression and exploitation, and took social action in order to fight for justice and equal rights.

The learning experiences included in this lesson are designed to help students actively engage with music from the Smithsonian Folkways collection, while achieving a deeper understanding of what it means to self-identify as “Chicana/o”.

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Lesson Paths and Student Objectives*



1. **What Is Chicana/o?** (approx. 30 minutes)
 - Students will identify textual and musical clues about Chicana/o identity.
 - Students will identify the typical instrumentation of *música nortena*.









2. **What Was the Chicano Movement?** (20-25 minutes)
 - Students will describe several rationales for the Chicano movement.



3. **Exploring Cultural Identity through Music** (45+ minutes)
 - Students will explain why certain songs became anthems to people who identified as Chicana/o during the Chicano movement.
 - Students will explain how music can celebrate/re-affirm cultural identity and serve as a symbol of cultural pride.
 - Students will use music to describe important aspects of their own cultural identity.

*Note: The learning icons used above signify the type of learning prioritized in each Path. Keep in mind that these Paths are not intended to be sequential; rather, teachers or students may choose which Paths they'd like to use from each Lesson Hub.

While all learning types ( History and Culture,  Music Listening,  Music Making and Creation, and  Creative Connections) fulfill 2014 National Music Standards, non-music teachers will be able to use  History and Culture and  Creative Connections Paths without specific musical knowledge.

Teaching Plan

Path 1: What Is Chicana/o?



To prepare:

- Preview Path 1 of the **Lesson 1 Slideshow**.
- Print the “Chicano” song lyrics for each student (find below).

Process: Guide student learning while facilitating the student slideshow

- Open the “Launch Slideshow” link on the righthand menu of the Lesson landing page. If you are able to use a different screen than the students, have them open the “Student Slideshow” link, which will not show the notes.
1. **Discussion:** What is Chicana/o?
 - Ask students what they think the word Chicano means before starting the lesson in order to assess prior knowledge on the topic.
 - **Address the discussion points that are embedded in the slideshow.**
 - Websites that have ideas for interesting discussion strategies are linked in the additional resources section below.
 2. **Attentive Listening Activity:** “Chicano”

Listen to the recording of “Chicano” by Rumel Fuentes and Los Pingüinos del Norte.

 - While listening, students should fill in missing words on the lyrics document (which provide clues about Chicana/o identity).
 - Consider leading a short class discussion based on student responses (**discussion points are embedded in the slideshow**).
 3. **Attentive Listening Activity:** “Chicano”

What do the musical sounds communicate about Chicana/o identity?

 - Listen to several short excerpts from this recording (about 30–45 seconds at a time) and ask the following questions after each excerpt:
 - *Where (geographically) would you be most likely to hear this music?*
 - **Música nortena (MOO-see-kah nor-TEHN-ya) is a musical genre that originated in northern Mexico.**
 - **It is one of many regional traditions heard in south Texas and along the US/Mexican border (both sides . . . conjunto is the term usually used on the Texas side of the border).**
 - *What instruments do you hear?*

- **Accordion, steel-string guitar, 12-steel-string guitar, *tololoche* (contrabass)**

4. Connections:

- *Who are the musicians?*
 - **Rumel Fuentes and Los Pingüinos del Norte**
 - **Contextual information is provided within the slideshow.**
- Show the short video clip of Rumel Fuentes/ Los Pingüinos del Norte playing this song.

5. Attentive Listening Activity: “Chicano”

Listen to another short excerpt while thinking about this question:

- *What do you notice about the language?*
 - **Throughout the song, English and Spanish are intertwined (this is sometimes called “Spanglish”).**

6. Discussion:

Why do you think some people in the Mexican American community have (and continue to) identify as Chicana/o?

- **Important points are highlighted within the slideshow.**

Path 2: What Was the Chicano Movement?

To prepare:

- Preview Path 2 of the **Lesson 1 Slideshow**.
- Print the “Yo soy tu hermano, yo soy Chicano” song lyrics for each student (find below).



Process: Guide student learning while facilitating the student slideshow.

- Open the “Launch Slideshow” link on the righthand menu of the Lesson landing page. If you are able to use a different screen than the students, have them open the “Student Slideshow” link, which will not show the notes.
- Scroll to the Path Menu slide (slide 3) and click on Path 2.

1. Discussion:

What were the primary goals of the Chicano movement?

- **Unpack the discussion points provided on the slides.**

2. Attentive Listening Activity: “Yo soy tu hermano, yo soy Chicano”

- Listen to “Yo soy tu hermano, yo soy Chicano” by Conjunto Aztlan.
- Ask students to underline or circle words that provide clues about why people in Mexican American communities felt like an ‘uprising’ was needed during the time of the Chicano movement.

3. Discussion: “Yo soy tu hermano, yo soy Chicano”

Lead a short class discussion based on student responses to the listening exercise.

- **Discussion points are embedded in the slideshow.**

4. Optional Extension Activity: Issues and Images

In this optional activity, students will find and print historical images that illustrate several specific goals of the Chicano movement: **rights for farm workers**, **restoration of land**, and **education reform**.

- After students collect the images, the teacher can create a class collage using the prints.
- Alternately, this could become a group or individual creative writing activity that comes out of deeper consideration of the images. Either students can develop a skit based on characters from the images, or individual students can write about the views of the person in a short statement. Encourage students to consider their situation from the first-person perspective. This will encourage students to empathize with the individuals and their goals and reasons for joining the

movement. In a group activity, students could create a short conversation or skit based around the historical events they learned about in the lesson. Alternately, they could make an individual statement in the first person, a kind of character portrayal of a person in one of the photos. Encourage them to interpret the photo by thinking about the context and Chicano movement goal (farm worker rights, land restoration, or education reform).

- **NOTE:** Farm worker rights are covered more deeply in [Lesson 6](#), education reform in [Lessons 7](#) and [12](#), and land restoration in [Lessons 3](#) and [8](#).

Path 3: Exploring Cultural Identity through Music



To prepare:

- Preview Path 3 of the **Lesson 1 Slideshow**.
- Print the “Yo soy Chicano” song lyrics for each student (find below).
- Print the “My Multicultural Self” worksheet¹ for each student (find below).
- Print the “Exploring Cultural Identity through Music” worksheet for each student (find below).

Process: Guide student learning while facilitating the student slideshow.

- Open the “Launch Slideshow” link on the righthand menu of the Lesson landing page. If you are able to use a different screen than the students, have them open the “Student Slideshow” link, which will not show the notes.
 - Scroll to the Path Menu slide (slide 3) and click on Path 3.
- 1. Discussion:** What is an anthem?
 - **Unpack the discussion points provided on the slides.**
 - 2. Attentive Listening Activity:** “Yo soy Chicano”
 - While listening, students will circle or underline words as they identify song lyrics that celebrate/re-affirm Chicana/o cultural identity.
 - 3. Discussion:** “Yo soy Chicano”
 - Lead a short class discussion based on student responses to the listening exercise.
 - 4. Discussion:**
Cultural identity is complex!
 - **Unpack the discussion points provided on the slides.**
 - 5. Creative Activity 1:** My Multicultural Self
Students will identify important aspects of your cultural identity.
 - Explicit instructions are provided in the slideshow and on the worksheet.
 - **NOTE: This can be completed during class or as homework.**
 - 6. Creative Activity 2:** Music and Cultural Identity
Students will choose an anthem that reflects one aspect of their cultural identity and will explain their choice.
 - **NOTE: This can be completed during class or as homework.**
 - A rubric for this activity is provided below.

¹ Reprinted with permission of Learning For Justice, a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center www.learningforjustice.org.

2014 National Music Standards Connections

MU:Re7.1.a Select or choose music to listen to and explain the connections to specific interests or experiences for a specific purpose.

- Can I select an anthem that reflects one facet of my cultural identity?

MU:Re7.2.a Describe how the elements of music and expressive qualities relate to the structure of the pieces.

- Can I describe how musical elements are used in the recording of the song “Chicano”?

MU:Re7.2.b Identify the context of music from a variety of genres, cultures, and historical periods.

- Can I explain the context of the selected musical recordings for this lesson?

MU:Re8.1.a Describe a personal interpretation of how creators’ and performers’ application of the elements of music and expressive qualities, within genres and cultural and historical context, convey expressive intent.

- Can I interpret how the musicians featured on these musical recordings convey what it means to identify as Chicano?

MU:Cn10.0.a Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.

- Can I explain why the anthem I chose reflects my cultural identity?

MU:Cn11.0.a Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life.

- Can I explain how the songs in this lesson were used during the Chicano movement of the 1960s/1970s?
 - Can I describe how music functions as an expression of cultural identity and a symbol or cultural pride?
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Additional Reading and Resources

- Azcona, E. C., & Rodriguez, R. (2005). *Rolas de Aztlán: Songs of the Chicano movement* [Liner notes]. Smithsonian Folkways Recordings. <https://folkways-media.si.edu/docs/folkways/artwork/SFW40516.pdf>
- Blank, L., & Strachwitz, C. (1976). (Directors). *Chulas fronteras* [Film]. Les Blank films. <https://lesblank.com/films/chulas-fronteras-1976-2/>
- Escobar, E. J. (1993). The dialectics of repression: The Los Angeles police department and the Chicano movement, 1968-1971. *The Journal of American History*, 79(4), 1483–1514. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2080213>
- Gonzalez, J. (2015, October 15). *The big list of discussion strategies*. Cult of Pedagogy. <https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/speaking-listening-techniques/>
- Montoya, M. (2016). *The Chicano movement for beginners*. For Beginner Books.
- Reading and Writing Haven (n.d.). *12 powerful discussion strategies to engage students*. Reading and Writing Haven: A Blog for Educators. <https://www.readingandwritinghaven.com/12-powerful-discussion-strategies-to-engage-students/>
- Rosales, F. A. (1996). *Chicano! The history of the Mexican American civil rights movement*. Arte Público Press.
- Strachwitz, C. (1995). *Chulas fronteras* [Liner notes]. Arhoolie Records. <https://folkways-media.si.edu/docs/folkways/artwork/ARH00425.pdf>
- Zettler, J. (2009). *Corridos of the Chicano movement* [Liner notes]. Arhoolie Records. <https://folkways-media.si.edu/docs/folkways/artwork/ARH00507.pdf>

Worksheets
“Chicano” song lyrics

by Doug Sahn; Recorded by Rumel Fuentes and Los Pinguinos del Norte

While you listen to this song, fill in the blanks with words that provide clues about Chicana/o identity.

Chicano, soy Chicano
 ‘Cause I’m _____ and I’m _____
 And I’ll make it in my own way.
 Some people call me _____
 But I know that is the real world
 ‘Cause to me all I am is Mexicano.

Chicano, soy Chicano
 All my brothers _____ right now.
 And all across the USA
 I just woke up and say
 Chicano, soy Chicano
 Right On!

Chicano, soy Chicano
 I can fly just as high and
 As long as I want to.
 Some people call me _____
 ‘Cause I’m no longer the _____
 Pobrecito Mexicano.

Translation:

Chicano, I’m Chicano
 ‘Cause I’m _____ and I’m _____
 And I’ll make it in my own way.
 Some people call me _____
 But I know that is the real world
 ‘Cause to me all I am is Mexican.

Chicano, I’m Chicano,
 All my brothers _____ right now.
 And all across the USA
 I just woke up and say
 Chicano, I’m Chicano
 Right On!

Chicano, I’m Chicano
 I can fly just as high and
 As long as I want to.
 Some people call me _____
 ‘Cause I’m no longer the _____
 Disempowered Mexican.

Keep filling in the blanks with words that relate to Chicana/o identity.

Chicano, soy Chicano
 Mis hermanos organicen pero yá
 Todo el mundo lo sabrá
 Y este vato les dirá
 Chicano, soy Chicano
 ¡Dale shine!

Chicano, soy Chicano
 ‘Cause I’m _____ and I’m _____
 And I’ll make it in my own way.
 Some people call me _____
 ‘Cause I’m no longer the _____
 Pobrecito Mexicano.

Chicano, soy Chicano
 Soy café, tengo orgullo
 Y yo se que yo la voy a hacer.
 Unos me dicen, “hippy”
 Otros me dicen, caifán,
 Pero yo solo se que soy puro Mexican!
 ¡Pa’ que sepan!

Chicano, I’m Chicano
 All my brothers _____ right now
 And all across the USA
 I just woke up and say
 Chicano, I’m Chicano
 Right On!

Chicano, I’m Chicano
 ‘Cause I’m _____ and I’m _____
 And I’ll make it in my own way.
 Some people call me _____
 ‘Cause I’m no longer the _____
 Disempowered Mexican.

Chicano, I’m Chicano
 ‘Cause I’m _____ and I’m _____
 And I’ll make it in my own way.
 Some people call me hippy
 Others call me a bum
 But all I am is pure Mexican.
 Now you know!

“Yo soy tu hermano, yo soy Chicano” song lyrics

Recorded by: Conjunto Aztlan

When you listen to this song, underline or circle words that provide more clues about why people in Mexican American communities felt like an ‘uprising’ was needed during the time of the Chicano movement.

Dicen que ando alborotando
Porque con mi raza quiero despertar.
Tanta injusticia me está rodeando
Ya no me aguanto, yo quiero pelear.

(Estribillo)

**Yo soy tu hermano, yo soy Chicano.
Dame tu mano, vamos a volar.
Bien dice el dicho: si sangra mi hermano,
Yo también sangro, la herida es igual.**

Roban las tierras, roban trabajos,
Mataron a mi hermano allá en Vietnam.
Perdón le pido a la Guadalupe:
Tanta injusticia, me hicieron pelear.

(Estribillo)

Como Zapata y Pancho Villa,
A los tiranos quiero castigar.
Hambre y pobreza me están matando,
Yo no me aguanto, yo quiero pelear.

They say I am stirring things up
Because I want to wake up my people
So much injustice is all around me,
I cannot stand it any longer, I want to fight.

(Refrain)

**I am your brother, I am Chicano.
Give me your hand, let’s fly.
As the saying goes: If my brother bleeds,
I also bleed, the wound is the same.**

They steal lands, they steal jobs,
They killed my brother over there in Vietnam.
I ask forgiveness of the Virgen of Guadalupe
So much injustice, they made me fight.

(Refrain)

Like Zapata and Pancho Villa,
I want to punish the tyrants.
Hunger and poverty are killing me,
I cannot stand it; I want to fight.

Keep circling or underlining words that relate to the need for uprising, but see if you can also find the words in Spanish.

(Estribillo)

Yo soy tu hermana, yo soy Chicana.
Dame tu mano, vamos a volar.
Bien dice el dicho: si sangra mi hermana,
Yo también sangro, la herida es igual.

Ya estoy cansado de voltear la cara,
Ya mi paciencia ya se me acabó.
Chotas y rinchos son muy desgraciados,
Y la ley gringa se burla de mí.

(Estribillo)

Yo soy tu hermana, yo soy Chicana.
Dame tu mano, vamos a volar.
Bien dice el dicho: si sangra mi hermana,
Yo también sangro, la herida es igual.
¡Yo soy Chicano!

(Refrain)

I am your sister, I am Chicana.
Give me your hand, let’s fly.
As the saying goes: if my sister bleeds,
I also bleed, the wound is the same.

I am tired of turning my cheek,
My patience has just run out.
Cops and Rangers are disgraceful,
And gringo law mocks me

(Refrain)

I am your sister, I am Chicana.
Give me your hand, let’s fly.
As the saying goes: When my sister bleeds,
I also bleed, the wound is the same.
I am Chicano!

“Yo soy Chicano” song lyrics

Recorded by: Los Alvarados

While you listen to this song, circle or underline words that celebrate Chicana/o cultural identity.

(Estribillo)

Yo soy Chicano, tengo color,
Puro Chicano, hermano con honor.
Cuando me dicen que hay revolución,
Defiendo a mi raza con mucho valor.

Tengo todita mi gente
Para la revolución.
Voy a luchar con los pobres
Pa' que se acabe el bolón.

(Estribillo)

Tengo mi par de pistolas
Para la revolución.
Una es una treinta y treinta,
Y otra es una treinta y dos.

(Refrain)

I am Chicano, of color,
Pure Chicano, a brother with honor.
When they tell me there is revolution,
I defend my people with great valor.

I have all my people
For the revolution.
I am going to fight alongside the poor
To end this oppression.

(Refrain)

I have my pair of pistols
For the revolution.
One is a thirty-thirty,
And the other is a thirty-two.

Keep circling or underlining words that celebrate Chicana/o identity, but see if you can also find the words in Spanish.

(Estribillo)

Tengo mi par de caballos
Para la revolución.
Uno se llama “El Canario,”
Y otro se llama “El Gorrión.”

(Estribillo)

Tengo mi orgullo y machismo,
Mi cultura y corazón.
Tengo mi fe y diferencia,
Y lucho con gran razón.

(Estribillo)

Tengo todita mi gente
Para la revolución.
Voy a luchar con los pobres
Pa' que se acabe el bolón.

Tengo mi orgullo, tengo mi fe.
Soy diferente, soy color café.
Tengo cultura, tengo corazón,
Y no me lo quita a mí ningún cabrón.

(Refrain)

I have my pair of horses
For the revolution.
One is called “El Canario” (The Canary)
The other is called “El Gorrión” (The Sparrow).

(Refrain)

I have my pride and my manliness,
My culture and my heart.
I have my faith and differences
And I fight with great conviction.

(Refrain)

I have all my people
For the revolution.
I am going to fight alongside the poor
To end this oppression.

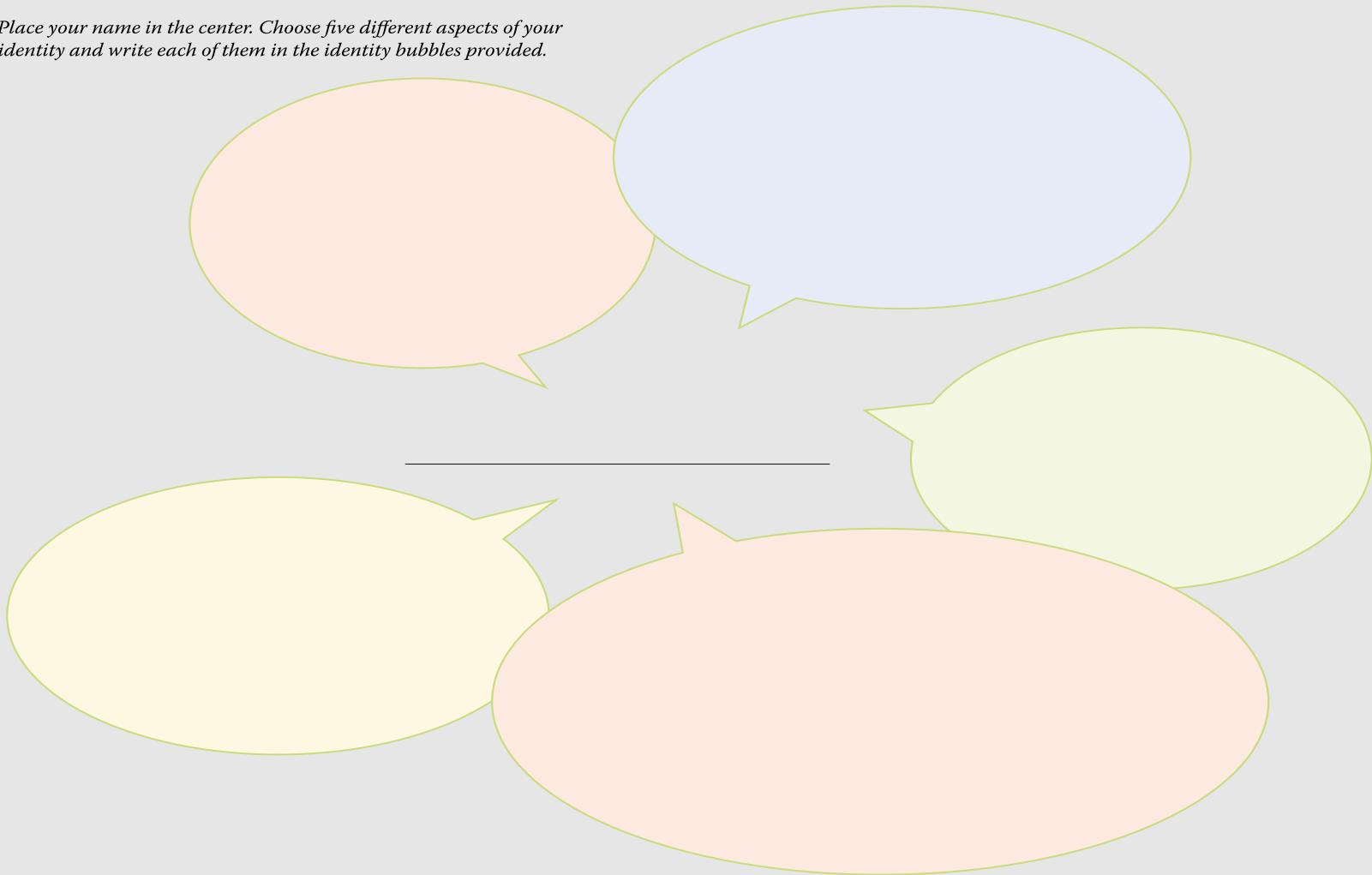
I have my pride, I have my faith.
I am different, I am of brown color.
I have culture, I have heart,
And no son-of-a-gun will take it away from me.

My Multicultural Self

MIDDLE/UPPER GRADES ACTIVITY

Place your name in the center. Choose five different aspects of your identity and write each of them in the identity bubbles provided.

TEACHING
TOLERANCE 



FOLKWAYS

Exploring Cultural Identity through Music Assignment Rubric

2014 National Music Standards Documentation for this Learning Experience (5th-8th Grade):

MU:Re7.1.a Select or choose music to listen to and explain the connections to specific interests or experiences for a specific purpose.

- Select an “anthem” that reflects one aspect of your cultural identity.

MU:Cn10.0.a Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.

- Explain why this song reflects your cultural identity and serves as a symbol of cultural pride.

Suggested Rubric for Standards Documentation:

4 = Exceeds Standard	3 = Meets Standard	2 = Approaching Standard	1 = Does Not Meet Standard
The song selected by the student <i>clearly</i> connected to the facet of identity they were trying to reflect.	The song selected by the student connected to the facet of identity they were trying to reflect.	<i>With assistance</i> , the student selected a song that connected to the facet of identity they were trying to reflect.	The song selected by the student <i>did not</i> connect to the facet of identity they were trying to reflect.
The student identified <i>several</i> places in the lyrics that “celebrated” this facet of their identity.	The student identified one place in the lyrics that “celebrated” this facet of their identity.	<i>With assistance</i> , the student identified a place in the lyrics that “celebrated” this facet of their identity.	The student <i>did not</i> identify a place in the lyrics that “celebrated” this facet of their identity.
The student identified <i>several</i> places in the lyrics that were “uplifting”, “inspiring”, or “motivating.”	The student identified one place in the lyrics that was “uplifting”, “inspiring”, or “motivating.”	<i>With assistance</i> , the student identified a place in the lyrics that was “uplifting”, “inspiring”, or “motivating.”	The student <i>did not</i> identify a place in the lyrics that was “uplifting”, “inspiring”, or “motivating.”
The student’s response <i>artistically</i> and <i>imaginatively</i> included specific reference to interests, values, prior knowledge and/or experiences.	The student’s response included specific reference to interests, values, prior knowledge and/or experiences.	The student’s response included <i>general</i> but not specific reference to interests, values, prior knowledge and/or experiences.	The student’s response <i>did not</i> include references to interests, values, prior knowledge and/or experiences.