

Music of the Chicano Movement:

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



Teacher's Guide

Lesson Hub 11:

Tejano, Son Jarocho, and Other Modern Musical Fusions

Lesson Overview

Musical influences from Mexico continue to be important to modern-day *Chicana/o* musicians and listeners. Musicians often blend sounds of traditional Mexican musical genres with “American” influences (e.g., hip hop, funk, jazz, rock) to create their own unique sound. Some modern-day *Chicana/o* bands (such as Las Cafeteras, Quetzal, and Los Texmaniacs) also use their music as a powerful form of artistic citizenship . . . they see their music as a means to social justice as well as a form of creative expression.

Son jarocho, a distinct musical genre that originated in Veracruz, Mexico, in the eighteenth century, experienced a resurgence in California during the Chicano movement, and has remained an important part of Chicana/o culture in California for over 50 years. Son jarocho is a living tradition . . . it continues to evolve through a continuous cycle of tradition, interpretation, and innovation. **Tejano**, a form of dance music that originated and evolved in south Texas, is characterized by a unique blend of musical sounds from several different traditions (e.g., European polka/accordion, Mexican instruments and song forms, and American influences). The sound we now recognize as “modern” tejano music was catapulted into the mainstream American music market by Selena Quintanilla Perez in the early 1990s.

In this lesson, students will explore the ways in which modern-day *Chicana/o* musicians have blended traditional Mexican musical styles with other musical influences such as rock, r&b, hip-hop, punk, cumbia (and more) to create musical fusions that are meaningful, powerful, and relevant. Specifically, students will learn about the evolution of **tejano music** in Texas and the ways in which modern-day Chicano/a musicians in California incorporate certain aspects of **son jarocho** into their performances. Students will also have an opportunity to engage in **artistic citizenship** through their own musical creation and/or performance.

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Lesson Paths and Student Objectives *



1. Son Jarocho in California (30+ minutes)

- Students will explain why son jarocho cultivates community and is considered a “living tradition.”
- Students will identify similarities and differences between a traditional and modern interpretation of one of the best-known son jarochos in the world: “La bamba.”



2. The Evolution of Tejano (30+ minutes)







- Students will describe the evolution of tejano music in south Texas and beyond.



3. Artistic Citizenship . . . Chican@ Style! (30+ minutes)

- Students will identify the ways in which one modern-day Chican@ rock band (Quetzal) fuses different musical styles and perspectives to create its own unique sound.
- Students will describe how the members of Quetzal use their music to engage in artistic citizenship.
- Students will engage in artistic citizenship (through music).

*Note: The learning icons used above signify the type of learning used 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. The time estimate given for each Path indicates "in class" time. The + indicates there are optional extension activities and/or a suggested homework assignment.

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: Son Jarocho in California



To prepare:

- Preview Path 1 of the **Lesson Hub 11 Slideshow**.
- Print the Compare/Contrast 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 hub landing page. If you are able to use a different screen than the students, have them open the “Student Slideshow” link just below that, which will not show the notes.

1. **Share Information:** Son jarocho

Share historical and contextual information about the *son jarocho* (“sohn ha-RO-cho”) tradition and its resurgence during the time of the Chicano movement **(embedded in slideshow)**.

- Optional: Share the embedded video example of son jarocho (approx. three minutes).

2. **Show Video:** Son jarocho in Los Angeles

Show the embedded video (produced by Smithsonian Folklife), which details one musician’s perspective of the persisting significance of son jarocho music for the Chicana/o community in Los Angeles, CA.

- After showing this video, prompt students to share their thoughts about these guiding questions:
 - *Why does son jarocho cultivate community?*
 - *In what ways is son jarocho a “living tradition” in the United States?*
- Next, share **additional contextual information (embedded in the slideshow)** about the ways in which son jarocho cultivates community and can be understood as a “living tradition.”

3. **Optional Extension Activity:** Exploring “Tradition”

Instructions for this activity are included on slide 12:

- Put up a cutout of a tree trunk with branches.
- Have students create leaves for the tree by describing a family tradition.

- After they finish, discuss the meaning of the term “living tradition” (always evolving) . . . do any of the students’ leaves fit into this category? How have their family traditions changed over time?

4. **Attentive Listening Activity:** “La bamba”:

In this activity, students will compare two distinct interpretations of one of the best-known *sones jarochos* in the world: “La bamba.”

- **Share embedded contextual information** about the two bands featured in this activity and their versions of “La bamba.”
 - Video example 1 was recorded by José Gutiérrez & Los Hermanos Ochoa at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in 2004.
 - Video example 2 was recorded by a group from LA active in the first decades of the 21st century (Las Cafeteras) at the *Día de los Muertos* celebration at the National Museum of the American Indian in 2016.
- As students watch/listen to each example, they can use the provided compare/contrast worksheet (find below or on slideshow) to reflect upon similarities and differences in music elements, expressive qualities, meaning, purpose, and performance context (**Discussion points embedded in slideshow**).
 - If you would like to explore Las Cafeteras’ activist-oriented lyrics further, you can find them here: <https://lascafeteras.com/lyrics/#1492155068819-3d517c0a-of9b>
- Find a rubric for this activity below.

Path 2: The Evolution of Tejano Music



To prepare:

- Preview Path 2 of the **Lesson Hub 11 Slideshow**.
- Print (or prepare to display) the Mexico Americano song lyrics (find below).

Process: Guide student learning while facilitating the student slideshow.

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

1. Show Video: Defining “tejano”

Show the embedded video (produced by the National Portrait Gallery), which provides a brief overview of the life and musical contributions of tejano music star Selena Quintanilla-Pérez and provides a clear definition of the term tejano.

- Next, use the **information embedded in the slideshow** to provide additional context about this term.

2. Attentive Listening/Share Information: The Evolution of Tejano Music

A. Share the information embedded in the slideshow about early *conjunto tejano*.

- Provide an example of this style by playing a short excerpt from the audio recording embedded in the slideshow. (“La cuquita” by Narciso Martínez)

B. Share the embedded information about modern conjunto tejano.

- Provide an example of this more modern style by showing the embedded video (produced by Smithsonian Folkways), which features Los Texmaniacs’ arrangement of “Mexico Americano.”

C. Next, ask students to read the English translation of the “Mexico Americano” song lyrics (find below or in slideshow) while considering this question:

- *What is the main message of this song?*
 - Lead a short discussion based on student responses.
 - **Contextual information about the band and the meaning of this song is provided within the slideshow.**

D. Share the information embedded in the slideshow about *orquesta tejana* (“or-KESS-tah the-HA-nah”).

- Play a short excerpt from the audio recording embedded in the slideshow. (“Mi pecosita” by Beto Villa y su Orquesta)

- E. **Share the contextual information provided in the slideshow** about the modern tejano band sound and Selena Quintanilla-Pérez: the “Queen of Tejano.”

Path 3: Artistic Citizenship . . . Chican@ Style!



To prepare:

- Preview Path 3 of the **Lesson Hub 11 Slideshow**.
- Print the Artistic Citizenship Worksheet for each student.

Process: Guide student learning while facilitating the student slideshow.

- Open the “Launch Slideshow” link on the righthand menu of the Lesson hub landing page. If you are able to use a different screen than the students, have them open the “Student Slideshow” link just below that, which will not show the notes.
 - Scroll to the Path Menu slide (slide 3) and click on Path 3.
1. **Show Video:** “Get to Knowing” by Quetzal, featuring Aloe Blacc
Show the embedded video (produced by Smithsonian Folkways), which features Los Angeles-based band Quetzal playing a song called “Get to Knowing.”
 - As students watch/listen, ask them to think about this question:
 - *What type of music is this?*
 - **Share embedded information** about Quetzal and their musical influences.
 2. **Share Information:** Quetzal and Artistic Citizenship
Share the information (embedded in the slideshow) about the ways in which Quetzal band members consciously engage in artistic citizenship.
 3. **Show Video:** “Pillow People”
Play another Quetzal video, based on a song called “Pillow People:”
 - As students watch/listen, ask them to think about this question:
 - *What social issue do the band members address through this song?*
 - **Contextual information about this song is embedded in the slideshow.**
 4. **Creative Activity:** Artistic Citizenship Project
Within this activity, students will engage in artistic citizenship in one of the following ways:
 - **Presentational Performance:**
 - A live musical performance that is planned out ahead of time
 - **Participatory Performance:**
 - A performance that prioritizes group participation over a final, refined musical product

- **High-Fidelity Performance:**
 - A recording of a live performance
 - **Studio Audio Art Recording:**
 - A recording made using recording technology
 - **Telemusical Performance:**
 - Music making across long distances (virtually)
 - **More details about each of these categories and instructions for completion of this project are provided within the slideshow and the “artistic citizenship” worksheet.**
 - Students will use the worksheet to organize and document their thoughts and decisions as they work their way through this project (find below).
-

2014 National Music Standards Connections

MU:Pr4.1.a Demonstrate and explain how the selection of music to perform is influenced by personal interest, knowledge, and context, as well as their personal and others' technical skill.

- Can I explain my rationale for the song I chose to create/perform as part of my artistic citizenship project?

MU:Re7.1.a Demonstrate and explain, citing evidence, how selected music connects to and is influenced by specific interests, experiences, purposes, or contexts.

- Can I explain why son jarocho became popular during the time of the Chicano movement?
- Can I explain differences in context between two versions of “La bamba?”
- Can I explain the underlying purpose of tejano music?
- Can I explain the purposes of Quetzal’s music?

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

- Can I describe how elements of music and expressive qualities were applied in “La bamba” and “La bamba rebelde?”
- Can I describe differences in the ways that the elements of music were used as tejano music evolved?
- Can I describe how Quetzal fuses many different musical styles to create its own unique sound?

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

- Can I explain similarities and differences in purpose and context between “La bamba” and “La bamba rebelde?”
- Can I explain the cultural and historical influences and context of Quetzal’s compositions?
- Can I explain the evolution and historical/cultural context of tejano music?

MU:Re8.1.a Demonstrate and explain how the expressive qualities (such as dynamics, tempo, timbre, and articulation) are used in performers' and personal interpretations to reflect expressive intent.

- Can I describe differences between how José Gutiérrez & Los Hermanos Ochoa and Las Cafeteras each used expressive qualities to reflect expressive intent in their versions of the song “La bamba?”

- Can I explain how Quetzal's blending of musical styles reflects expressive intent?

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 Mexican American musicians in California wanted to perform son jarocho music during the time of the Chicano movement?
- Can I explain my rationale for the song I chose to create and/or perform as part of my artistic citizenship project?
- Can I explain why Selena Quintanilla-Pérez decided to perform tejano music and sing in Spanish?

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 my project relates to the idea of artistic citizenship?
 - Can I explain how Quetzal uses music to engage in artistic citizenship?
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Additional Reading and Resources

Balcomb, H. (2013). *Quetzal: On their own terms*. 2012 Smithsonian Folklife Festival Blog.

<https://festival.si.edu/blog/2013/quetzal-on-their-own-terms/>

Elliott, D., Silverman, M., & Bowman, W. (2017). *Artistic citizenship: Artistry, social responsibility, and ethical practice*. Oxford University Press.

González, M. (2017). The inspiration for Quetzal's "Pillow people." *Smithsonian Folklife Magazine*. <https://folklife.si.edu/talkstory/inspiration-for-quetzal-pillow-people>.

Loza, S. (2019). *Barrio harmonics: Essays on Chicano/Latino music*. UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Press.

Peña, M. (1992). *Tejano roots: Orquestas tejanas* [Liner notes]. Arhoolie Records.

<https://folkways-media.si.edu/docs/folkways/artwork/ARH00368.pdf>.

Rodriguez, R. (2011). *Imaginerias* [Liner notes]. Smithsonian Folkways Recordings.

<https://folkways-media.si.edu/docs/folkways/artwork/SFW40563.pdf>.

Sheehy, D. (2003). *La bamba: Sones jarochos from Veracruz* [Liner notes]. Smithsonian

Folkways Recordings. <https://folkways-media.si.edu/docs/folkways/artwork/SFW40505.pdf>.

Sheehy, D. (2009). *Borders y bailes* [Liner notes]. Smithsonian Folkways Recordings.

<https://folkways-media.si.edu/docs/folkways/artwork/SFW40555.pdf>.

Sheehy, D. (2018). *Cruzando borders* [Liner notes]. Smithsonian Folkways Recordings.

<https://folkways-media.si.edu/docs/folkways/artwork/SFW40576.pdf>.

Strachwitz, C. (1991). *Tejano roots* [Liner notes]. Arhoolie Records. [https://folkways-](https://folkways-media.si.edu/docs/folkways/artwork/ARH00341.pdf)

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Strachwitz, C. (1993). *Narciso Martinez: Father of the Texas-Mexican conjunto* [Liner notes].

Arhoolie Records. <https://folkways-media.si.edu/docs/folkways/artwork/ARH00361.pdf>.

Turino, T. (2017). Music, social change, and alternative forms of citizenship. In D. Elliott, M.

Silverman, & W. Bowman (Eds.). *Artistic citizenship: Artistry, social responsibility, and ethical practice* (pp. 297–312). Oxford University Press.

Vargas, D. R. (2017). *The eternal getdown* [Liner notes]. Smithsonian Folkways Recordings.

<https://folkways-media.si.edu/docs/folkways/artwork/SFW40574.pdf>.

Smithsonian Folkways Recordings (n.d.). José Gutiérrez and Los Hermanos Ochoa: Sones

jarochos from Veracruz. *Explore: Artist Spotlight*. <https://folkways.si.edu/jose-gutierrez-los-hermanos-ochoa-sones-jarochos-veracruz/latin-world/music/article/smithsonian>.

Unknown author (2009). Los Texmaniacs: Borders y bailes. *Smithsonian Folkways Magazine*.

<https://folkways.si.edu/magazine-summer-2009-los-texmaniacs-borders-bailes/latin-world/music/article/smithsonian>.

Worksheets

Son Jarocho Compare and Contrast Worksheet

Name: _____

	<p>“La bamba” <i>José Gutiérrez & Los Hermanos Ochoa</i></p>	<p>“La bamba rebelde” <i>Las Cafeteras</i></p>	<p>Comparing these interpretations, how are they similar or different?</p>
<p>Music Elements (what instruments do you hear? Texture? Do you notice anything related to rhythm, melody, or harmony? Form?)</p>			
<p>Expressive Qualities (what dynamics are used? Do you notice anything about the tempo and/or vocal timbre/style?)</p>			
<p>Meaning/Purpose/Context (what is the intent of the performers within this performance context? What message/story do the lyrics tell? What language is used? What is the role of audience members?)</p>			

Son Jarocho Compare and Contrast Activity Rubric

NAfME Standards Documentation for this Learning Experience (5th–8th Grade):

MU:Re7.1.a Demonstrate and explain, citing evidence, how selected music connects to and is influenced by specific interests, experiences, purposes, or contexts.

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

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

MU:Re8.1.a Demonstrate and explain how the expressive qualities (such as dynamics, tempo, timbre, and articulation) are used in performers' and personal interpretations to reflect expressive intent.

Suggested Rubric for Standards Documentation:

4 = Exceeds Standard	3 = Meets Standard	2 = Approaching Standard	1 = Does Not Meet Standard
<p><i>Using sophisticated descriptions or terminology, the student accurately identified musical elements and expressive qualities within each selection</i></p> <p><i>Using sophisticated descriptions or terminology, the student accurately identified similarities and differences regarding musical elements, expressive qualities, and meaning/purpose/performance context.</i></p>	<p>The student accurately identified musical elements and expressive qualities within each selection.</p> <p>The student accurately identified similarities and differences regarding musical elements, expressive qualities, and meaning/purpose/performance context</p>	<p>The student identified <i>some</i> musical elements and expressive qualities within each selection.</p> <p>The student identified <i>some</i> similarities and differences related to musical elements, expressive qualities, and meaning/purpose/performance context</p>	<p>The student identified <i>few or none</i> of the musical elements and expressive qualities within each selection.</p> <p>The student <i>needed help</i> in order to identify similarities and differences regarding musical elements, expressive qualities, and meaning/purpose/performance context</p>

“Mexico Americano” Song Lyrics

by Rumel Fuentes; Recorded by: Los Texmaniacs

Read the song lyrics and consider their meaning.

Por mi madre yo soy mexicano
Por destino soy americano
Yo soy de la raza de oro
Yo soy México americano

I am Mexican on my mother’s side
I am American by fortune
I belong to a golden race
I am Mexican American

Yo te comprendo en inglés
También te hablo en castellano
Yo soy de la raza de noble
Yo soy México americano

I understand English
I also speak Spanish
I belong to a noble race
I am Mexican American

Zacatecas a Minnesota
De Tijuana a Nueva York
Los dos países son mi tierra
Los defiando con honor

Zacatecas to Minnesota
From Tijuana to New York
Both countries are my homeland
I defend them with honor

Continue reading the song lyrics. How does the composer feel about his Mexican heritage? How does the composer feel about his American heritage? Do you think the performers (Los Texmaniacs) feel the same way?

Dos idiomas y dos países
Dos culturas tengo yo
En mi suerte tengo orgullo
Porque así lo manda Dios

Two languages and two countries
To two cultures I belong
I’m proud of my good fortune
Because that’s what God command

Por mi madre yo soy mexicano
Por destino soy americano
Yo soy de la raza de oro
Yo soy México americano

I am Mexican on my mother’s side
I am American by fortune
I belong to a golden race
I am Mexican American

Artistic Citizenship Worksheet

Name: _____

Through this project, you will have an opportunity to engage in *musical citizenship*.

Step 1: Choose one of the following areas to focus on for this project:

1. Presentational Performance:

A *presentational performance* is a live musical performance that is planned out and refined ahead of time.

- A. You will choose an existing song (or write your own) that tells a meaningful story, brings people together/promotes community, and/or tackles an important issue (this can be done individually, or in small groups).
- B. Next, you will rehearse and refine an interpretation of your chosen song.
- C. Finally, you will choose a performance venue and perform your song in front of a “live” audience (e.g., in front of the class, for a class of younger students in the school, at a retirement home, at a coffee shop, at a community gathering or event, etc.).

Presentational Performance Hypothetical Example:

- A. A group of three students chose to perform the song “Imagine” (by the Beatles) because they thought it was beautiful and had an important message about making the world a better place.
 - i. They listened to several arrangements online and found a backing track on YouTube.
- B. They printed the lyrics and practiced singing it together along with the recorded accompaniment.
- C. They scheduled a time with their general music teacher to perform it in front of the class and explained to their classmates why the song was important to them.

2. Participatory Performance:

A *participatory performance* prioritizes group participation over a final, refined musical product.

- If you choose this option, you will help others discover the power of music by finding a way to engage them in an active, meaningful, collective music-making experience.
- A. More specifically, you will choose a meaningful musical experience that builds community or brings awareness to an issue you care about and make a plan to share it with others . . . encouraging them to actively participate in the experience.
 - i. Examples: teaching younger students a campfire song, the school fight song, or a jump rope chant; teaching your classmates a simple folk dance or how to play a song on the ukulele; teaching your classmates a protest song; showing your

classmates a music video that has an important social message, leading people at a retirement home in a sing-along based on several familiar folk songs, etc...

Participatory Performance hypothetical example:

- A. A group of four students wanted to share the power of music with residents at a local retirement home.
- B. They chose three familiar folk songs (“If I Had a Hammer,” “This Land is Your Land,” and “Puff the Magic Dragon”), printed off lyrics sheets, and practiced singing them.
- C. They asked their music teacher to schedule a time for the sing-along with the director of the retirement home. Their teacher volunteered to accompany them on the guitar.
 - i. Everyone had a great time singing together (retirees and students alike). They even decided to sing some extra songs that everybody knew.

3. High-Fidelity Recording

A high-fidelity recording captures a live performance in some way.

- A. If you choose this option, you will choose an existing song (or write your own) that tells a meaningful story, brings people together/promotes community, and/or tackles an important issue (this can be done individually, or in small groups).
- B. Next, you will rehearse and refine an interpretation of your chosen song.
- C. Finally, you will make choices regarding how you will record/preserve it (video or audio recording, edited or not edited, etc...), and choose a way to share your recording with others.

High Fidelity Recording Hypothetical Example:

- A. A group of three students chose to perform the song “Imagine” (by the Beatles) because they thought it was beautiful and had an important message about making the world a better place. They decided to make a recording because they felt a little nervous about singing in front of a “live” audience.
 - i. They listened to several arrangements online and found a backing track on YouTube.
- B. They printed the lyrics and practiced singing it together along with the recorded accompaniment.
- C. After they felt comfortable singing the song, they used a phone to make an audio recording . . . it turned out pretty good!
 - i. They shared it on their class’s Google Classroom site and received some positive feedback from classmates.

4. Studio Audio Art Recording

A studio audio art recording is made using recording technology (e.g., computer software like Garageband or Soundtrap).

- A. If you choose this option, you will create music (related to a theme or issue that is important to you) using recording technology (e.g., a computer composition). You can do this independently or collaborate with others.

- B. You will build your composition using loops available on computer software programs or apps (or you can create/compose your own or create an arrangement of a familiar song).
- C. Then, you will choose a way to share your recording with others.

Studio Audio Art Recording Hypothetical Example:

- A. Two students in a general music class were excited about this project. Although they didn't like to sing in front of people, they were interested in electronic music and enjoyed listening to hip-hop music and creating their own rhymes.
- B. They experimented with putting drum loops together on Soundtrap until they found a combination they liked.
 - i. They decided to write a short rap about single-use plastics (an issue that was important to them).
- C. They recorded their rap over the beat they created on Soundtrap.
 - i. They shared their finished product on their class's Google Classroom site and received some positive feedback from classmates.

5. Telemusical Performance

A *telemusical performance* does not have face-to-face interactions and a final product (such as a recording) is not required. It involves making music with others across long distances.

- A. If you choose this option, you will collaborate with others by joining a “virtual” ensemble and attending a rehearsal (where you will become an active participant in a “virtual” community of music-makers).
- B. You can form your own “virtual musical community” with classmates on an interactive website (such as Zoom) or join a virtual ensemble that already exists (from a list provided by your teacher).

Telemusical Performance Hypothetical Example:

- A. A choir student was curious about what it would be like to sing in a virtual choir.
- B. After consulting with her teacher about options, she chose a reputable virtual choir to join.
- C. After signing up, she received sheet music and a backing track to practice with.
 - i. At the designated time, she joined the YouTube live stream. The group started with vocal warm-ups and then rehearsed the song.
 - ii. Although it was a bit strange at first, singing in a virtual choir made her feel a sense of community with people from all over the world.

Step 2:

Which option did you choose and why?

Step 3:

Briefly describe the process you went through as you completed this project . . . how did it go?