

Second Line Arts Collective

Lesson 12: Call and Response: Lil Liza Jane

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, students will explore the lively New Orleans jazz tune “Lil’ Liza Jane.” Through call-and-response singing and rhythmic activities, they’ll connect with the communal and improvisational spirit of jazz.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand the tradition of call-and-response in New Orleans jazz.
2. Sing and respond to the melody of “Lil’ Liza Jane.”
3. Participate in rhythm and movement activities inspired by the song.

Materials Needed

- Lyrics or recording of “Lil’ Liza Jane.”
- Percussion instruments (optional, such as tambourines, shakers, or drums).
- Open space for group participation.

Lesson Steps

Introduction to Call-and-Response and 'Lil' Liza Jane' (5 minutes)

- Start by explaining the concept of call-and-response:
 - One person sings or plays a phrase (the call).
 - The group responds with a repeated phrase or rhythm (the response).
- Share that “Lil’ Liza Jane” is a classic New Orleans jazz song known for its energetic call-and-response structure.

- Play a short snippet of the song to familiarize students with the melody and rhythm.

Learn and Practice the Call-and-Response (10 minutes)

- Teach the call-and-response pattern:
 - Leader sings: “Oh, Lil’ Liza”
 - Group responds: “Lil’ Liza Jane!”
- Practice singing the phrase together, alternating roles between leader and group.
- Gradually add rhythmic clapping or percussion to enhance the response.

Add Movement and Rhythm (10 minutes)

- Encourage students to move to the rhythm of the song:
 - Clap, stomp, or sway in time with the beat.
 - Optionally, use scarves or ribbons to add dynamic movement.
- Form a mini parade or circle where students take turns leading the call while others respond.
- Encourage improvisation by letting leaders create their own variations of the call.

Group Reflection and Cool Down (5 minutes)

- Ask students:
 - How did it feel to take turns leading and responding?
 - Why do you think call-and-response is a fun way to make music together?
- Discuss how “Lil’ Liza Jane” captures the energy and joy of New Orleans jazz.

Extension Activities

- Instrument Exploration: Add percussion instruments to mimic a jazz band playing along with the call-and-response.
- Creative Writing: Let students create their own lyrics for the call-and-response format.
- Art Connection: Have students draw a jazz band performing “Lil’ Liza Jane.”

Reflection Questions

- What did you enjoy most about singing “Lil’ Liza Jane”?
- How does the call-and-response make the song more interactive?
- Can you think of another song that uses call-and-response?

Teacher/Parent Tips

- Keep the call-and-response simple for younger students to ensure participation.
- Reinforce the rhythm by modeling claps or stomps during the response.
- Emphasize the improvisational and fun nature of New Orleans jazz to encourage creativity.