

Teaching Jazz, Creating Community

Commitment to Kids Creativity Self Discipline Celebrity with Heart Humility

STORY

Wynton Marsalis is best known as an award-winning jazz musician. But for students in the thousands of schools he's visited, he's a role model telling them to "take your freedom and put it into the service of somebody else's." Young people like Roberto Perez in Washington D.C. have learned from Wynton how jazz can be a metaphor for creating democracy. "What a kid learns from jazz is how to express his individuality without stepping on somebody else's," says Wynton. "Being a good neighbor, that's what jazz is all about."

ACTIONS

Language Arts and Music Appreciation

- Play Wynton Marsalis' music and ask students to listen and share how it affects them? Have them draw, paint or write about the way it makes them feel.
- Create a music appreciation class; have students identify various musical instruments, and listen for their sequence in the piece; and the quality of harmony between them.
- Compile a list of music terminology and add to a weekly spelling list or have a spelling
- *Bee: harmony, rhythm, tempo, woodwind, percussion, cymbals, trumpet, lute etc.*
- Make a collage of images of famous musicians, their musical style and their instruments.
- Develop a list of biographies about musicians for students to read and write a report.
- Have students with musical talents play their instruments and teach others how to play.
- Research historic music pieces; discuss how they've helped create harmony among people.

Social Studies

- Invite local musicians to play and speak to students about their life, studies and music.
- Clip and share newspaper articles on several musicians who are helping others.
- Research various music schools where students might apply to go to college.

Community Service

- Host a school-wide concert (inside or outdoors) and invite the community - use it as a fundraiser for a school music program or for music lessons or student scholarships.
- Invite people in your community to donate their old musical instruments to the school.
- Contact your Rotary Club to learn how to donate instruments to developing countries.
- Support music events in your community. Get a calendar of events, send it home.

Wynton Marsalis is featured on the *Stone Soup for the World* educational video.

Stone Soup for the World: Life-Changing Stories of Everyday Heroes
Stone Soup Leadership Institute

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Reflection Questions

1. What other famous musicians have helped young people?
2. How is creating harmony in music a similar process to creating harmony among people?
3. What happens when we focus on making our own "music" vs. being good neighbors?
4. Ask students: "What does the last quote in the story mean to you?"

Lessons You Can Learn

1. Rise above prejudices and follow your dreams.
2. Find creative ways to share your gifts and talents with others.
3. To enjoy living in a democracy, we must learn to respect and create harmony with others.
4. Once you make it in the world, go back and help others make their dreams come true.