



# **Music of the Tex-Mex Border Region**

**Denver Public Schools**

**In partnership with Metropolitan State College of Denver**

**El Alma de la Raza Project**



# Music of the Tex-Mex Border Region

By Ron Ingle II

Grades 6–8

Implementation Time  
for Unit of Study: 3–4 weeks

**Denver Public Schools**

El Alma de la Raza Curriculum  
and Teacher Training Program

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El Alma de la Raza Series

# Music of the Tex-Mex Border Region

## Unit Concepts

- History of the Tex-Mex border region and its music
- Blending of European and Mexican music
- Musicians who have made Tejano music famous
- Different types of Tejano music
- Learn a simple beat and compose music

## Standards Addressed by this Unit

### Reading and Writing

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences. (RW2)

Students write and speak using formal grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. (RW3)

Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. (RW4)

### Geography

Students know how to use and construct maps and other geographic tools to locate and derive information about people, places, and environments. (G1)

Students apply knowledge of people, places, and environments to understand the past, present, and plan for the future. (G6)

### History

Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time. (H3)

### Music

Students will read and notate music. (M2)

Students will listen to, analyze, evaluate, and describe music. (M4)

Students will relate music to various historical and cultural traditions. (M5)

## Introduction

Mexicans struggled for independence for many years, beginning in the 16th century when Cortez conquered the vast Aztec Empire. Over the next 300 years, Spain ruled Mexico as a Spanish colony.

In 1810, a priest by the name of Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla issued the “Grito de Dolores,” a decree calling for the end to Spanish rule. Miguel and his followers were captured and executed.

The Anglos first arrived in Texas in 1821 and settled in three distinct, separate regions: the Nacogdoches region, the Bexar-Goliad region along the San Antonio River, and the Rio Grande ranching frontier between the Nueces river and the Rio Grande. These settlements were used primarily for military purposes, and had populations that fluctuated from 1,500 to 2,000 each.

In the Bexar-Goliad region, ranches, many of which were along the San Antonio River, represented a significant social element. After the war for Texas Independence in 1836, the southern boundary of Texas extended to the Rio Grande, and the southern rancheros became Texas citizens. In 1845, the U.S. Congress voted to annex Texas and war with Mexico quickly ensued. By 1848, the U.S. overwhelmed the Mexican army and won the war. Utah, Texas, Nevada, Arizona, California, New Mexico and most of Colorado came under U.S. control.

San Antonio had been established as the midway point between Mexico and the missions of east Texas in 1718. Many Europeans migrated to Texas and Mexico and brought with them the Waltz, Polka, and other forms of music and dance. It was not until the Mexican Revolution of 1910-1917 that these Europeans were forced to return to their homeland.

The word “Tejano” translated literally means Texas-Mexican, and also refers to the Tex-Mex border culture between Texas and Mexico. Tejano is considered a meld of Texas and Mexican language and traditions.

During the early years of Mexico, a man named Gregorio Cortez would tell stories of fact and folklore. Cortez was a vaquero (cowboy) and hero of the border region — he could shoot, ride horses, drink and sing. He would sing ballads about the love of Mexico, called corridos. The Tejanos led a rough life, making a living from ranching and agriculture, but were very proud of their heritage. An occasional musician would travel to the ranches and farms, singing songs from Spain and Mexico that had been passed down through generations. Their basic instruments were the flute, guitar and violin.

By the 1940s, Tejano songs evolved to fit the style of music at the time, until it eventually had its own unique sound. Also in the 1940s, the accordion, drum and the bajo sexto (a 12-string bass guitar) were introduced into Tejano music. Eventually, Tejano music became a mixture of European, Spanish, American and Mexican influences.

## Implementation Guidelines

This unit is based on 45-minute classes that meet daily and can be used in any 6th, 7th, or 8th grade social studies class or in a general music class. Lessons can be shortened or expanded to fit the needs of the teacher and their schedules. The first few lessons are easily adaptable to the general teacher. The ending lessons are a bit more complicated, but are explained in simple terminology. However, if there is something you do not understand, you should consult with a music specialist. Students must be able to work independently and in cooperative groups. The teacher should assess the student’s skill levels in reading and writing based upon their prior

knowledge. Listening to music involves a certain skill in itself. You need to listen to individual melodic lines in order for the lessons to be successful. The listening lessons are self-explanatory to the teacher, but the teacher needs to listen to the selections several times beforehand to model the lesson. Although these lessons are geared toward a general music class, the unit also addresses geography, history, and reading and writing standards.

## Instructional Materials and Resources

*The Texas Mexican Conjunto: History of a Working-Class Music* by Manuel H. Pena

*The Billboard Guide to Tejano and Regional Music* by Ramiro Burr

*With His Pistol in His Hand* by Américo Paredes

*Songs of the Homeland* (video) by Hector Galan

*Chulas Fronteras* (video) by Madera Cinevideo

## Lesson Summary

Lesson 1	History and migration of the Texas-Mexicans ..... 4 Students will read about the history and struggle of the Mexicans as well as their music before the ballad.	4
	Lesson 1 Extension: Identifying the “ump-pa-pah” sound ..... 12 Students listen to the music of the Europeans and dance to the Waltz and Polka.	12
Lesson 2	European influences on the Tex-Mex sound ..... 14 A discussion on the traditional “Western” classical music and its composers.	14
Lesson 3	Mexican influences on the Tex-Mex sound ..... 16 Music of the Mexicans and a blending of the two cultures.	16
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Lesson 5	<i>Songs of the Homeland</i> video ..... 23 Viewing of the video and answering questions.	23
Lesson 6	Composing Tejano music ..... 27 Students compose their own accompaniment of Tejano music, using classroom instruments. Advanced students may write lyrics for an additional assignment.	27

# LESSON 1:

## History and migration of the Texas-Mexicans

### What will students be learning?

#### STANDARDS

Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW1)

Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. (RW4)

Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time. (H3)

Students apply knowledge of people, places, and environments, to understand the past, present, and plan for the future. (G6)

#### BENCHMARKS

Students will use comprehension strategies.

Students will make predictions, analyze, draw conclusions, and discriminate between fact and opinion in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

Students know how various societies have been affected by contacts and exchanges among diverse people.

Students know how to apply geography to understand the past.

#### OBJECTIVES

Students will draw on a map the migration of the Spanish, Mexicans, and Texans into the three border regions, and have problems to solve.

Students will read about the history and struggle of the Mexican people.

Students will read about Mexican music before the corrido.

Students will make a time line of the major events in Mexican history.

#### SPECIFICS

Since Texas was not a part of the United States, and was still considered part of Mexico, the migration into the three regions — the Lower Rio Grande, the Bexar-Goliad, and the Nacogdoches — happened partly out of military purposes, but also because of ranching.

### What will be done to help students learn this?

#### INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Read aloud/Small group reading

Note taking

Teacher guided/Student directed

Time line

Problem solving

### PRELIMINARY LESSON PREPARATION

In the book, *With His Pistol in His Hand*, Américo Paredes provides in-depth historical information about the musical transformation of Texas. Beginning with page 108 through the end of the book, there are specific sections on the corrido, and the music that came before which consisted of folkloric ballads, romances, decimas and coplas or versos. Many of the songs were written about the issues of that time, which included water shortages and ranching problems. The teacher is to create problems concerning the settlements, such as a water shortage or ranching problems, for the students to solve. The teacher will need to obtain a map of Mexico prior to the year 1836 (before the Texas War for Independence) and make copies for students, along with copies of the time line worksheet. Use the websites below as reference guides throughout this lesson and the rest of the unit.

[http://mexconnect.com/mex\\_/history.html](http://mexconnect.com/mex_/history.html)

<http://gomexico.about.com/travel/gomexico/library/weekly/aa991013.htm?iam=mt&terms=%2Bmiguel+%2Bhidalgo>

<http://users.constant.com/~ths/march2.html>

### ACTIVITIES

Students will draw on a map the migration patterns of the Spanish, Mexicans and Texans into the three border areas; the Nacogdoches, Bexar-Goliad and Rio Grande River regions. After learning the basic physical characteristics of the region, students will speculate why the various groups settled in their respective regions.

Using *With His Pistol in His Hand*, students will read about the music of the border regions before the creation of the corrido. They will be able to explain the different kinds of music and give a definition of the corrido.

Using the first web site listed above, students are to make a time line of the major events in the Mexican's struggle for independence, beginning with Mexico's movement for independence from Spain in 1810 through the establishment of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in 1920. If Internet access is not available, students should use reference books on Mexico to make their time lines.

After learning about the three border regions, the students will split into three groups, each one representing one of the three regions. Each group will be presented with a series of problems. Each group should present ideas as to how they would react to military, water and ranching problems in their region. The groups will present their solutions to these problems to the class. Since each region has unique physical characteristics and resources, each group will have a unique reaction to the above problems.

### RESOURCES/MATERIALS

Overhead projector for group note taking

*With His Pistol in His Hand*

Chart paper

Reference books on Mexico

Internet

Map of Mexico prior to 1836

**ASSESSMENT**

**Problem-Solving Activity — Assessment**

Use the rubric below to assess the group problem-solving activity.

<u>Rubric points</u>	<u>Description</u>
4 .....	The group provides logical, thoughtful answers specific to the physical characteristics of their region.
3 .....	The group provides answers to the military, water and ranching problems, yet they aren't specific to their region. The answers are vague and don't use or acknowledge the strengths or weaknesses of their region.
2 .....	The group fails to provide answers for all three problems (military, water and ranching). They do not provide specific characteristics about their region that may have an impact on the problems themselves.
1 .....	The group provides no logical or thoughtful answers for the three problems facing their region. It is apparent they failed to learn or use their knowledge to develop logical answers for the problems facing their regions.

**Map Activity — Assessment**

As a class, review the map activity to ensure that students were able to find the three different regions and identify them on a map. Grading on the map can be done on its designation of the regions or simply by participating in the activity.

**Time Line — Assessment**

The time line should cover from 1810–1920, which is an extensive period. It is recommended that students be graded on the number of significant events included in their time line. Over this 110-year span, it is fair to ask the students to find at least 25 different significant events for their time line. Use the Teacher's Copy to assist in the evaluation of the students' time lines, however, some of the events they list may be different than those listed on the Teacher's Copy (this is acceptable).

<u>Rubric points</u>	<u>Description</u>
4 .....	The student has included 25 or more dates and events.
3 .....	The student has included 20–24 dates and events.
2 .....	The student has included 15–19 dates and events.
1 .....	The student has included 14 or fewer dates and events.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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## Mexico's Struggle for Independence — 1810 to 1920

List at least 25 significant events that occurred between 1810 to 1920

Year	Event(s)
1810	

▼

*(continued)*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Mexico's Struggle for Independence — 1810 to 1920

Year	Event(s)

(continued)



# TEACHER'S COPY

## Mexico's Struggle for Independence — 1810 to 1920

Year	Event(s)
1810	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Miguel Hidalgo, a priest in the city of Dolores, issues his "Grito de Dolores," a cry for independence. This grassroots movement will attempt to overthrow the Spanish government of Mexico.</li> </ul>
1811	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Miguel Hidalgo is captured and killed by Spanish forces.</li> </ul>
1812	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jose Maria Morelos continues where Hidalgo left off in battling the Spanish for Independence.</li> </ul>
1821	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agustin de Itrubide issues his Plan de Iguala, calling for Mexico's independence, and claiming himself the country's emperor.</li> </ul>
1824	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna and other generals proclaim Mexico a republic and oust Itrubide.</li> </ul>
1858	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benito Juarez becomes president. Once elected he nationalizes the lands belonging to the Roman Catholic Church in Mexico.</li> </ul>
1861	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Juarez stops loan payments to France, England and Spain. All send occupying forces, demanding payment.</li> </ul>
1862	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On May 5 (Cinco de Mayo), a small Mexican force defeats a larger French force at the city of Puebla. The French reorganize following the battle and continue their invasion of Mexico.</li> </ul>
1864	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximilian of Austria becomes the ruler of Mexico.</li> </ul>

(continued)

## TEACHER'S COPY

### Mexico's Struggle for Independence — 1821 to 1920

(continued)

Year	Event(s)
1867	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under protest from the United States, the French withdraw their occupation of Mexico. Maximilian is assassinated in the city of Queretaro. Juarez resumes his presidency.</li> </ul>
1871	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Porfirio Diaz leads a revolt against the rule of Juarez, which fails.</li> </ul>
1872	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benito Juarez dies.</li> </ul>
1877	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diaz again organizes a revolt against the successor to Juarez. He is successful and begins his 36-year reign. Diaz invites foreign investment to industrialize the nation, however with this action, the poor suffer the most due to the reforms instituted by Diaz.</li> </ul>
1910	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Francisco Madero begins the Mexican Revolution by calling for an uprising against the Diaz regime. Fighting begins against the Diaz military forces.</li> </ul>
1911	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Madero's forces are successful in defeating and ousting Diaz.</li> </ul>
1913	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victoriano Huerta orders the assassination of Madero, and then takes over the presidency. Pancho Villa, Alvaro Obregon and Benustiano Carranza rise up against the Huerta regime.</li> </ul>
1915	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The U.S. formally recognizes Carranza as president of Mexico</li> </ul>
1917	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Mexican congress adopts a new constitution.</li> </ul>
1920	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carranza is defeated and Alvaro Obregon becomes president.</li> <li>• The Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) is established.</li> </ul>

## LESSON 1 EXTENSION: Identifying the “ump-pa-pah” sound

### What will students be learning?

#### STANDARDS

Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. (RW4)

Students use appropriate technologies to extend comprehension and communication skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing. (RW7)

Students will listen to, analyze, evaluate, and describe music. (M4)

Students will relate music to various historical and cultural traditions. (M5)

#### BENCHMARKS

Students will make predictions, analyze, draw conclusions, and discriminate between fact and opinion in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

Students will use appropriate technologies to access, process, and communicate information for a variety of purposes.

#### OBJECTIVES

Students will listen to recordings of the Waltz and the Polka.

Students will identify the instruments and the rhythm of the music.

Students will dance to the music specified.

### What will be done to help students learn this?

#### INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Cooperative learning groups

KWL chart

Modeling

#### PRELIMINARY LESSON PREPARATION

The Waltz is a dance in three (3), meaning there are three steps (beats). The first beat is the strong beat and the second and third steps are weak. So it is 1-2-3, 1-2-3, 1-2-3, or ump (1), pa (2), pah (3). In dancing time, you would take one big step on 1 and two smaller steps on 2 and 3. You (the teacher) should practice this a few times to model for the students. The Polka is a dance in two (2), meaning there are two steps (beats). The first beat is the strong one and the second is the weak one. So it is 1-2, 1-2, 1-2, or ump (1), pah (2). In this dance you would take a big step to the left or right on 1 and then your feet would come together on 2.

### ACTIVITIES

As a class, use a KWL chart to list what the students know, what they want to know, and when done, what they have learned about the Polka and Waltz. Model for the students the dance steps. Listen to the music as a whole class and then break into groups, having each group listen to and dance to the music within their group. The students should do the Waltz first and then the Polka.

### RESOURCES/MATERIALS

CD of Waltzes

CD of Polkas

Chart paper

CD players (one for each group)

### ASSESSMENT

The teacher should observe the students in active group participation, through dancing and working on identification of the strong and weak beats of the music they are listening to.

## LESSON 2: European influences on the Tex-Mex sound

### What will students be learning?

#### STANDARDS

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences. (RW2)

Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. (RW4)

Students know how to use and construct maps and other geographic tools to locate and derive information about people, places, and environments. (G1)

Students will relate music to historical time periods, cultural traditions, and other academic disciplines. (M5)

#### BENCHMARKS

Students will write and speak for a variety of purposes such as telling stories, presenting analytical responses to literature, conveying technical information, explaining concepts and procedures, and persuading.

Students will identify the purposes, perspective, and historical and cultural influences of a speaker, author, or director.

Students know how to use maps and other geographic tools to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.

#### OBJECTIVES

Students will draw on a map of North America the land occupied by Mexico prior to 1836.

Students will identify on a map the countries of Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic.

Students will listen to the music of the people who composed the Waltz and the Polka.

#### SPECIFICS

There are many Europeans who composed Waltzes and Polkas. Some of the more familiar names are: "The Waltz King," Johann Strauss Jr.; Czech Composer Bedrich Smetana; Ludwig Beethoven; Chopin; and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

For the students to understand the Tejano culture today, we must look back at history before the U.S. acquired the western half of today's America. The migration of the Europeans to Texas and Mexico, and their style of music and dance they brought with them, had a great impact on Tejano music today. By listening to the Polka, the Waltz, and other forms of music like the March or a version of the "Country Swing," and by finding the basic beat of the music, we can compare Tejano music to its earlier European counterpart. Another influence to consider is the French intervention period of 1862-1867, which was led by the Austrian Archduke Maximilian and his wife Carlotta. They influenced the Mexicans by playing European music forms and composers, including some of the Waltzes and Polkas. When the French pulled out of Mexico in 1867, the Archduke refused to leave, and he was executed by Benito Juarez.

## **What will be done to help students learn this?**

### INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Teacher guided/student directed

Discussions

Listening to the Waltz and Polka in various forms

### LESSON PREPARATION

Obtain a black line map of North America in 1836 and of Europe prior to teaching this lesson. Make sure that a CD player is available.

### ACTIVITIES

Students will color in the map of North America in 1836, showing the area of that composed the Mexican territory. Next, they will color a map of Europe; identify Germany, Poland, and parts of the Czech Republic using different colors. Discuss some of the possible reasons why people from these countries may have moved to America.

Listen to the music from Germany (Polka, Waltz), Poland (Polka) and from the Czech Republic (Polka, folksongs). Discuss with the class the differences in each type of music. Identify these differences on the chart paper in the classroom. Listen to some Tejano music. Identify similarities between European music and Tejano music.

### RESOURCES/MATERIALS

Atlases

Map of North America in 1836

Map of Europe

Colored pencils

CD of German Polkas

CD of German Waltzes

CD of Polish Polkas

CD of Czech Polkas and folksongs

CD of Tejano music

Chart paper

### ASSESSMENT

The teacher should check for the completion of the student's maps. Make sure that on the map of Europe, the countries are differentiated by color. The map of North America should also be represented by different colors where the taking of Mexican territories took place. To assess the maps, use a classroom atlas to ensure that the countries have been identified in the correct locations. Use a standard history text to evaluate the North American maps of Mexican territories prior to 1836. It is recommended the maps be graded on completeness according to the atlas and text using standard grading policies.

## LESSON 3:

# Mexican influences on the Tex-Mex sound

### What will students be learning?

#### STANDARDS

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences. (RW2)

Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. (RW4)

Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time. (H3)

Students apply knowledge of people, places, and environments, to understand the past, present, and plan for the future. (G6)

Students will relate music to historical time periods, cultural traditions, and other academic disciplines. (M5)

#### BENCHMARKS

Students will write and speak to peers, teachers, and the community.

Students will use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing to gather data, define the problem, and apply problem-solving skills.

Students will identify the purpose, perspective, and historical and cultural influences of a speaker, author, or director.

Students know how various societies have been affected by contacts and exchanges among diverse peoples.

Students know how to apply geography to understand the past.

#### OBJECTIVES

Students will read about the corridos of the border region.

Students will read about the corridos sung by Gregorio Cortez.

Students will compare/contrast the different styles of music from the Europeans and the Mexicans.

Students will use critical thinking skills, by blending the two cultures.

#### SPECIFICS

The Mexican influence on the Tex-Mex sound is crucial to the development of this type of music. The first and most important aspect is the language, since the lyrics are in Spanish. Mexican music also focuses on the special connection with the people and their land, a common theme found in Tex-Mex music.

### What will be done to help students learn this?

#### INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Read aloud

Compare/contrast

Two-column note taking

### LESSON PREPARATION

Using the book, *With His Pistol in His Hand*, beginning on page 151, locate songs about corridos, Gregorio Cortez and his shoot-out with the local sheriff. The songs do not have to be sung, but can be read aloud instead. For background information, reference the following web site: <http://www.ondanet.com/tejano/tejhstory.html>. (You may want to print out this information and make copies for students.)

### ACTIVITIES

Beginning with page 151 of *With His Pistol in His Hand*, have students read stories about corridos, Gregorio Cortez and the history of the border region. While reading, the students should complete the two-column notes worksheet on the facts of the stories, summarizing the similarities and differences of European and Mexican styles of music presented in the stories. When done with the readings, the class should discuss the similarities and differences. The teacher or students should write them down on chart paper for the class.

### RESOURCES/MATERIAL

Chart paper

*With His Pistol in His Hand*

### ASSESSMENT

The teacher may want to evaluate students' notes for completion. The teacher should also evaluate student participation during the class discussion on European and Mexican styles of music.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Page 1 of 1

## Similarities and differences between Mexican and European music

Similarities	Differences

## TEACHER'S COPY

### Similarities and differences between Mexican and European music

Similarities	Differences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both types of music relate the origin of the peoples' culture: European music related mostly to the aristocracy; Mexican music related to the Mexican lower class.</li> <li>• Both types of music were used to bring people together.</li> <li>• Musical aspects of the Polka remain in the Tejano style of music even today, usually evident in the lively and upbeat songs and music.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mexican corridos are sung in Spanish and are mostly lyrical. Waltzes and Polkas were traditionally music pieces without lyrics.</li> <li>• European Waltzes and instruments were non-migratory, unlike Tejano music. Europeans came to hear and dance and musicians usually did not travel.</li> <li>• A unique sound was added to Tejano music through the use of the button accordion.</li> <li>• European music remains stationary in association with the "masters," Beethoven, Bach and Mozart, in very formal written pieces of music.</li> <li>• Early Tejano music was sung by rote and taught to the next generation through oral traditions.</li> </ul>

## LESSON 4: Identifying Tejano stars and their music

### What will students be learning?

#### STANDARDS

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences. (RW2)

Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. (RW4)

#### BENCHMARKS

Students will write and speak for a variety of purposes.

Students will use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing to gather data, define the problem, and apply problem-solving skills.

#### OBJECTIVES

Students will identify the “ump-pa-pah” sound from Polkas and Waltzes.

Students will identify famous Tejano musicians.

Students will learn by reading passages about Narcisco Martinez, Santiago Jiminez, Lydia Mendoza, and Selena.

Students will listen to the music of the people they are reading about.

#### SPECIFICS

The time line of Tejano musicians begins in the early 1900s with Narcisco Martinez, the “Father of Conjunto Music,” as he defined the role of the accordion in Tejano music. He is followed by Lydia Mendoza in the 1920s and Jiminez “El Flaco” Santiago. In the 1940s, Valerio Longoria introduced lyrics to Tejano music. Next, in the 1950s, Isidiro Lopez replaced the Spanish that Valerio used with Tex-Mex lyrics. Little Joe and the Latinairs created a newer sound influenced by the disco era. Little Joe continued to make music and in the 1980s proved to record company executives that there was money to be made in Tex-Mex music. In the later half of the 1980s, a young woman named Selena emerged as the next famous Tejano singer (unfortunately, she was tragically killed).

### What will be done to help students learn this?

#### INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Read aloud passages of the book

Two-column note taking

Clapping of the rhythm (ump-pa-pah)

Time line

### ACTIVITIES

As a class, read aloud pages 40-43, from *The Texas Mexican Conjunto: History of a Working-Class Music*. Reading this section will provide information about Narcisco Martinez and “El Flaco” Santiago, as well as Lydia Mendoza. They will also read a brief article in the book about Selena Perez. Students will take two-column notes on the articles. Students will then listen to recordings of Polkas and Waltzes to find the “ump-pa-pah” sound. The teacher will play short parts of the above-mentioned music for the students to familiarize themselves with the music. A short quiz compiled from student-made tests will follow the recordings and will be over the notes taken while listening to the music.

### RESOURCES/MATERIALS

*The Texas Mexican Conjunto: History of a Working-Class Music*

Excerpts from various recordings to find the “ump-pa-pah” sound

### ASSESSMENT

The students should work in groups of four to develop a test on the information from pages 40-43 of *The Texas Mexican Conjunto: History of a Working-Class Music*. The groups should include answers for their tests. The teacher should take questions from all the groups’ tests and conduct an oral quiz over the information from the text.

Group (names) \_\_\_\_\_

Page 1 of 1

## ***The Texas Mexican Conjunto: History of a Working-Class Music***

### **Student-Made Test**

Working as a group, come up with five questions on the information on pages 40-43 of *The Texas Mexican Conjunto: History of a Working-Class Music*. Questions will be selected from each group for an oral exam.

---

Question #1:

*Answer:*

---

Question #2:

*Answer:*

---

Question #3:

*Answer:*

---

Question #4:

*Answer:*

---

Question #5:

*Answer:*

---

## LESSON 5: *Songs of the Homeland* video

### What will students be learning?

#### STANDARD

Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. (RW4)

#### BENCHMARK

Students will use reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing to gather data and define the problem and apply problem-solving skills.

#### OBJECTIVE

Students will learn the history of the Tejano culture through this video and be able to answer questions about the video.

#### SPECIFICS

*Songs of the Homeland*, is a step-by-step video account of the history of Tejano music, from the people and musicians who lived it. The history covered in the video begins around the early 1900s and goes through to the present. This video may take more than one day to view.

Another video, *Chulas Fronteras*, is important for the students to view because it has a section featuring Lydia Mendoza playing a corrido and a septima, and another section where a folkwaltz of Mexico is played (which can be compared to the European-style waltz).

### What will be done to help students learn this?

#### INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Teacher-directed questions

Viewing the videos

Note taking

#### PRELIMINARY LESSON ACTIVITIES

Make copies of the *Songs of the Homeland* worksheet for students to answer while watching the video.

#### ACTIVITIES

Students will watch the *Songs of the Homeland* video and complete the worksheet provided in this lesson. Students will take notes on the major figures in Tejano music as well as their contributions.

The students will then watch the *Chulas Fronteras* video and take notes on the individual musicians and their contributions to Tejano music.

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

*Songs of the Homeland* video

*Songs of the Homeland* worksheet

*Chulas Fronteras* video

ASSESSMENT

Student participation during the question and answer sessions should be assessed. Also, using the grading key below, the teacher should assess the *Songs from the Homeland* video worksheet.

The answers to question #13 will vary. It is recommended you give the students 1/2 a point for every correct Tejano musician they identify as extra credit, which makes it possible to score over 100% on this worksheet.

<u>Scale</u>	<u>Grade Equivalent</u>
10-12 answers correct .....	A
9-11 answers correct .....	B
7-8 answers correct .....	C
6 answers correct .....	D
5 or less answers correct .....	F

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Page 1 of 1

## ***Songs of the Homeland*** **Video Worksheet**

1. Where is the capital of today's Tejano Music? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Who was the first female recording artist in Tejano music? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Lydia Mendoza sang songs about what? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Germans, Polish, and the Czechs used what instrument? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Who was the "Father of Conjunto Music?" \_\_\_\_\_
6. In 1940, Valerio Longoria introduced what to Conjunto Music? \_\_\_\_\_
7. In the 1950s, Mexican-Americans moved into the middle class. What kind of popular music was there in the United States at that time? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Isidiro Lopez played what instrument? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Conjunto music is related to what kind of music in the United States? (e.g. Rock, Swing, Gospel)  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Sunny Ozuna wanted to play what kind of music? \_\_\_\_\_
11. La Familia Chicano music came to the forefront during what "Free Love" period? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Little Joe broke through to the mainstream in what year? \_\_\_\_\_

***Extra Credit:***

13. Can you name any other Tejano musicians? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## TEACHER'S COPY

### *Songs of the Homeland* Video Worksheet – Answers

1. Where is the capital of today's Tejano Music?  
*Answer: San Antonio*
  2. Who was the first female recording artist in Tejano music?  
*Answer: Lydia Mendoza*
  3. Lydia Mendoza sang songs about what?  
*Answer: Love*
  4. Germans, Polish, and the Czechs used what instrument?  
*Answer: Button accordion*
  5. Who was the "Father of Conjunto Music?"  
*Answer: Narcisco Martinez*
  6. In 1940, Valerio Longoria introduced what to Conjunto Music?  
*Answer: Lyrics or words*
  7. In the 1950s, Mexican-Americans moved into the middle class. What kind of popular music was there in the United States at that time?  
*Answer: Big Band*
  8. Isidiro Lopez played what instrument?  
*Answer: Saxophone*
  9. Conjunto music is related to what kind of music in the United States? (e.g. Rock, Swing, Gospel)  
*Answer: Country music*
  10. Sunny Ozuna wanted to play what kind of music?  
*Answer: Rhythm and blues*
  11. La Familia Chicano music came to the forefront during what "Free Love" period?  
*Answer: 1960s*
  12. Little Joe broke through to the mainstream in what year?  
*Answer: 1985*
- Extra Credit:*
13. Can you name any other Tejano musicians?  
*(Students will have a variety of answers.)*

## LESSON 6: Composing Tejano music

### What will students be learning?

#### STANDARDS

Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time. (H3)

Students will read and notate music. (M1)

Students will listen to, analyze, evaluate, and describe music. (M4)

Students will relate music to historical time periods, cultural traditions, and other academic disciplines. (M5)

#### BENCHMARK

Students will know how various societies have been affected by contacts and exchanges among diverse peoples.

#### OBJECTIVES

Students will learn the basic principles of music theory and apply them to writing a composition.

Students will be able to read and then notate their music onto lined rhythmic staff paper.

#### SPECIFICS

Lined rhythmic staff paper has lines where the students write a rhythm. Each line is for a separate instrument. Each measure or block of sound has an equal number of beats, which could be used in accompaniment of already-produced Tejano music.

### What will be done to help students learn this?

#### INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Teacher guided/student directed

#### PRELIMINARY LESSON ACTIVITIES

Prepare an overhead showing an example of a simple music composition (notes).

#### ACTIVITIES

Students will receive some instruments to use in their compositions as well as lined rhythmic staff paper. These instruments may be homemade or they can use classroom instruments. The students will find simple rhythms for each instrument and write down those rhythms.

EXAMPLE: 

Students will create a song using the instruments in the group. The students will need to practice individually and as a group, and then perform their compositions, complete with a title of the song, and all of the participants playing together. Advanced students can write lyrics along with the song to fulfill Reading and Writing Standards.

RESOURCES/MATERIALS

Instruments such as shakers, lumi sticks, wood blocks, tambourines, or other classroom instruments

Lined rhythmic staff paper

Overhead

Pencils

ASSESSMENT

Completion of the composition in terms of writing out the rhythms and using the correct number of beats and a performance of the composition. Performances may be graded based on the student's ability to play through the song without laughing, or stopping; if there is a nice blend of the instruments given; and overall creativity.

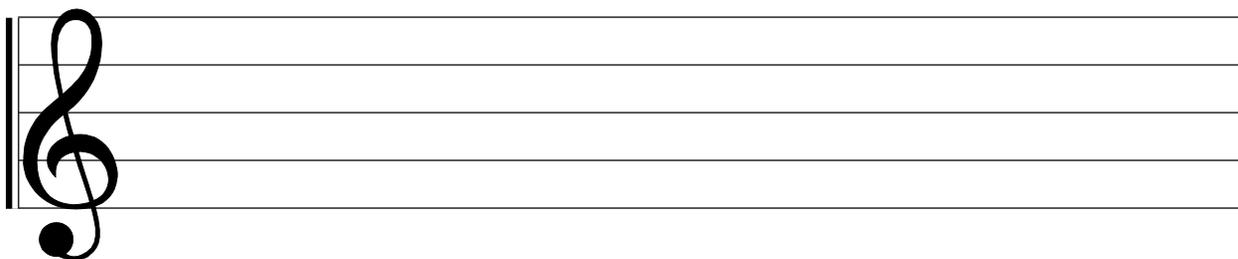
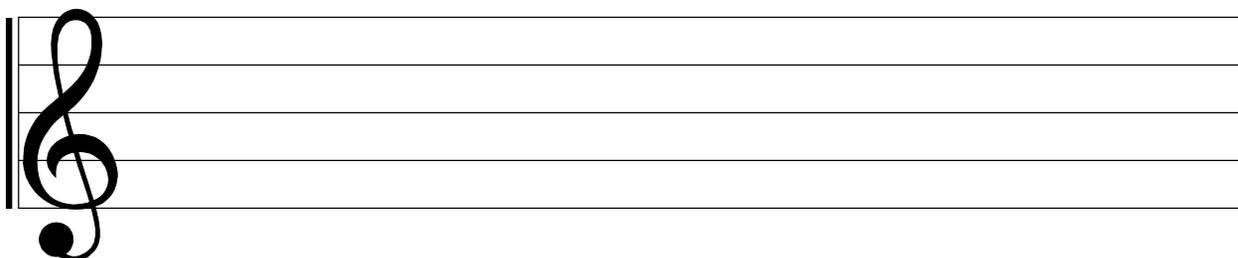
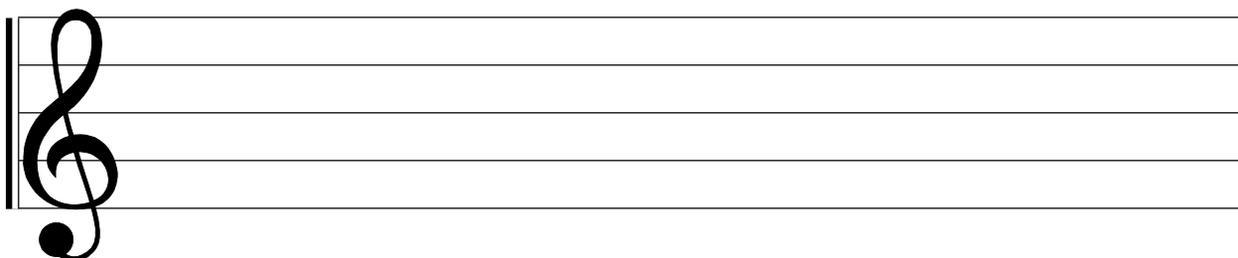
<u>Rubric Score</u>	<u>Description</u>
3 .....	Composition shows some creativity and aspects of Tejano music. Or it can include a Waltz or Polka beat. Students have also included lyrics for their composition.
2 .....	Composition shows some creativity by the group. Tejano, Waltz or Polka beats are represented in their composition. There are no lyrics for their composition.
1 .....	Composition is lacking in overall effort by the students. No effort has been made to replicate any known beat. No lyrics are present.

Group (names) \_\_\_\_\_

## Original Tejano Composition

Use this rhythmic staff to create an original Tejano composition.

Song Title: \_\_\_\_\_



# UNIT ASSESSMENT

## How will students demonstrate proficiency?

### PERFORMANCE TASK

The teacher will split the class into three groups. Each group will represent one of the three regions from Lesson 1: Nacogdoches, Bexar-Goliad and Rio Grande. Students will compose a song using the historical-regional information gathered in Lesson 1, and information from other lessons. The group will perform their song in front of the class.

In addition, the group will write a short biography on a Tejano music star. The biographies should include name, date of birth, location of birth, and the most important contribution they made to Tejano music. See the grading rubric for the items that will be evaluated in the biography.

<u>Scoring Rubric</u>	<u>Description</u>
4 .....	The group has composed a song with lyrics that represent either physical or historical characteristics of their respective region. The students have performed the song and were able to keep a rhythmic beat to the song. It is obvious that the group went to great effort to complete the assignment.
3 .....	The lyrics for the song were somewhat representative of the physical and/or historical characteristics of the group's region. For the most part, a rhythmic beat was maintained throughout the presentation. The group's overall effort was apparent, yet the final product was lacking creativity.
2 .....	The lyrics for the song were somewhat representative of the physical and/or historical characteristics of the group's region. The group was unsuccessful at maintaining a rhythm for their song. Effort towards completion of the project was minimal at best.
1 .....	The lyrics for the song had no representation whatsoever about the group's assigned region. There was little or no effort to keep a consistent beat with the lyrics of the song. The group made little or no effort to complete the project as assigned.

### Grading checklist for Tejano music star biography:

Title page .....	25 points
Spelling .....	25 points
Grammar .....	25 points
Length of paper .....	25 points
Correct location and date of birth .....	50 points
Key contributions to Tejano music .....	50 points
Visual aids .....	<u>10 points</u>
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>210 points</b>

<u>Points Accrued</u>	<u>Grade Earned</u>
210-189 .....	A
188-168 .....	B
167-147 .....	C
146-126 .....	D
125 and below .....	F

Group (names) \_\_\_\_\_

## Unit Assessment — Historical/Regional Composition

Use this rhythmic staff to create a composition based on historical information for your assigned region.

Region:  Nacogdoches  Bexar-Goliad  Rio Grande

Song Title: \_\_\_\_\_

The image contains five blank musical staves, each with a treble clef on the left. The staves are arranged vertically and are intended for students to write their compositions. Each staff consists of five horizontal lines.

## Bibliography

Burr, Ramiro. *The Billboard Guide to Tejano and Regional Music*. New York: Billboard Books, 1999.

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Paredes, Américo. *With His Pistol in His Hand*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1998.

Pena, Manuel H. *The Texas Mexican Conjunto: History of a Working-Class Music*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1985.

## About the Author

Ron Ingle II first became interested in music at the age of 7 when he began playing the trombone. Ron has lived in Denver all of his life and attended Denver Public Schools.

During his earlier years, he played in a 1930s/1940s dance band called “Brass Beat” and continued to play throughout high school. Growing up, Ron’s home life involved going to the symphony, the theater, and taking part in some of those theater productions. In college, he auditioned for a salsa band, which he played in for two years. While in that band he was able to travel and play with many famous people like Doc Severinson, Dr. Billy Taylor, Wynton Marsalis, and many others. Even though he does not speak Spanish, Ron has a love for Tejano music.

Ron has taught in the Denver Public Schools for two years and is currently at Smith School of the Arts, and at Slavens Elementary where he teaches music.