RUMBLE: The Indians Who Rocked The World

FILM SYNOPSIS

Named after the 1958 Link Wray smash hit, RUMBLE traces the influence of Native Americans on nearly a century of popular music in an eloquent and engaging way. American popular music – and the history of rock and roll itself – certainly would not have been the same without the contributions of Native American performers. As the film reveals, the early pioneers of the blues had Native as well as African American roots, and one of the first and most influential jazz singers' voices was trained on Native American songs. As the folk rock era took hold in the 60s and 70s, Native Americans helped to define its evolution.

RUMBLE shows how Indigenous music was part of the very fabric of American popular music from the beginning, but that the Native American contribution was left out of the story – until now.

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# IN THE SPIRIT OF ATATIĆE?

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**USING THIS GUIDE**

This educator guide is intended to provide context and background to the film RUMBLE, offering a range of Pre-Viewing, Viewing, and Post-Viewing activities that underscore educational benchmarks of Montana Core Content Standards. The themes of the film are outlined in the context of Montana Office of Public Instruction’s Indian Education for All Essential Understandings. Follow-up questions, sample curricular content, and additional resources on topics addressed in the film are provided for teachers so they can adequately engage with students in the film and provide clear and defined learning objectives.
Stevie Salas

A guitar player, writer, producer, and composer, Stevie Salas (Apache) has recorded on over 70 different albums with artists as diverse as George Clinton, Justin Timberlake, Buddy Miles, T.I., Mick Jagger, and Rod Stewart. Having sold over two million solo albums around the world, Stevie has been cited as one of the top 50 guitarists of all time.

RUMBLE is inspired by Salas’ own personal journey in the music industry. A Native American and top-notch guitarist for a scope of musicians, Salas often wondered why no one around him looked the way he did. He has researched the topic for years and unveiled his discoveries in a 2010 Smithsonian exhibit called “Up Where We Belong: Native Musicians in Popular Culture.” The exhibit changed the written history for Native American musicians and became the substantive basis for “Rumble” in its examination of the often-under-appreciated role Native Americans played in the development of American popular music.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

• To understand the deep seeded connections between modern day popular music and traditional tribal music

• To identify the contemporary issues that come with appropriating Native identity through art and music

• To identify how music might serve as a vehicle to express identity

• To identify the current state of popular music and the diversity of sounds across various tribes throughout North America

• Show how Native Americans have been forced to negotiate their identities

• To identify the importance of telling this story within the context of a documentary film

GUIDING QUESTIONS

• What are the Indigenous roots of Rock and Roll?
• How does music come into play with tribal sovereignty?
• How do events like the Massacre at Wounded Knee impact the practice of traditional song and dance among other U.S. tribes?
• In what ways does music play a role in cultural expression?
• Why might Native American music have been seen as “dangerous” and a “threat” by U.S. officials? With this, what power does music hold as a platform for expressive integrity?
BY THE NUMBERS:
As noted according to TeachRock.org’s curricula

- One of the most actively suppressed expressions of Native American culture during the late 19th and early 20th century was music.

- The various forms of singing, drumming, and dancing fluctuates greatly from tribe to tribe and reflect deep cultural tradition and practice across North America.

- Traditional musical practices among tribal groups were banned and non-compliance was often used as a reason to withhold the land and rations to Native Americans as part of various treaties and acts of Congress.

- The “Ghost Dance” emerged during the late 19th century as part of a pan-tribal religious movement. Participants often believed that the dance would unite Native Americans and drive out colonists. In December, 1890 U.S. cavalry surrounded Lakota members and murdered between two- and three-hundred men, women, and children in the Massacre at Wounded Knee.

- Iconic artists like Charley Patton, Mildred Bailey, Jimi Hendrix, Robbie Robertson, and Redbone were among the first to express their Native perspective through popular music.

- In recent times, musical artists have melded their own traditions with au currant forms of expression to give Navajo (Diné) drum and bass sounds of Sihasin, Inuit capella of Pamua, country-rock stories of Arigon Starr, Standing Rock inspired folk of Raye Zaragoza, among others.

FILM SUBJECTS/INTERVIEWEES:

- Jennifer Kresiberg, Musician, Tuscarora
- Pura Fé, Musician and Founder of the Ulali Project, Tuscarora
- Stevie Salas, Musician, Apache
- George Clinton, Musician
- Link Wray, Musician, Shawnee
- Monk Boudreaux, Musician, Choctaw
- Joy Harjo, Poet and Musician, Muscogee-Creek
- Erich Jarvia, Historian and Geneticist, Tuscarora
- Iggy Pop, Musician
- Ivan Neville, Musician, Choctaw
- Rhianne Giddens, Musician, Occaneechi
- And many more!
Montana Common Core Standards

This unit addresses Montana Core Literacy Standards and offers a variety of teaching techniques to encourage teachers to meet the needs of students from grade 6-12. All activities meet a variety of MCCS curriculum requirements, as well as National Core Standards and assist in engaging students in active engagement with nonfiction film!

Writing

CCRA.W.2
Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

CCRA.W.3
Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

CCRA.W.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCRA.W.5
Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

CCRA.W.6
Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

CCRA.W.9
Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Speaking & Listening:

Speaking & Listening

CCRA.SL.1
Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCRA.SL.2
Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CCRA.SL.4
Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
National Core Standards

Media Arts

MA: Cr.1.1.I
Use identified generative methods to formulate multiple ideas, develop artistic goals, and problem solve in media arts creation processes.

MA: Cr. 2. 1. I
Apply aesthetic criteria in developing, proposing, and refining artistic ideas, plans, prototypes, and production processes for media arts productions, considering original inspirations, goals, and presentation context

(MA:Re8.1.I)
Analyze the intent, meanings, and reception of a variety of media artworks, focusing on personal and cultural contexts

(MA:Re9.1.HS.I)
Evaluate media art works and production processes at decisive stages, using identified criteria, and considering context and artistic goals.
Essential Understanding 2
Just as there is great diversity among tribal nations, there is great diversity among individual American Indians as identity is developed, defined, and redefined by entities, organizations, and people. There is no generic American Indian.

The various American Indian artists identified in the film are excellent examples of the diversity among Indian people. Each person had their own unique cultural background and they represented a wide variety of Tribal Nations. The various cultural and regional influences had a powerful impact upon their music. Several of the artists were easy to visually identify as American Indian and other artists had more of a cultural mosaic background that included Native American lineage. Regardless of how “much” Native they were, their Indigenous roots were an integral part of their identity.

Essential Understanding 3
The ideologies of Native traditional beliefs and spirituality persist into modern day life as tribal cultures, traditions, and languages are still practiced by many American Indian people and are incorporated into how tribes govern and manage their affairs.

The film also highlights the deep spiritual connection with music and how those cultural traditions impacted the artists and their music. Many of the songs featured in the film show how those traditional beliefs and values flowed through the music in a powerful manner. The song from the Dakota Access Pipeline protest clearly showed spiritual connections to the land and how everything in life is related.
Essentially Understanding 5:
There were many federal policies put into place throughout American history that have affected Indian people and continue to shape who they are today. Many of these policies conflicted with one another. Much of Indian history can be related through several major federal policy periods:

- Colonization/Colonial Period, 1492-1800s
- Treaty-Making and Removal Period, 1778-1871
- Reservation Period – Allotment and Assimilation, 1887-1934
  - Allotment Act background:
    - In 1887 Congress passed the General Allotment Act also known as the ‘Dawes Act’. “Friends” of American Indians believed that this act and other assimilationist practices were an alternative to the extinction of Indian people.
    - When the allotment process began in 1887, the total land held by American Indian tribes on reservations equaled 138,000,000 acres. By the end of the allotment period landholdings had been reduced to 48,000,000 acres. Since 1934 the landholdings have slowly increased to 56,000,000 acres.
    - The US government has a federal trust system that is supposed to protect Indian interests: assets, land, water, income from trust property, and treaty rights. Yet, as the film mentions, the government has not always filled its obligations as a trustee. RUMBLE explains how these injustices and exploitation of land has devastated the tribes socially and economically, and how this played into the attempted suppression of Native and Indigenous rich cultural expression.

- Tribal Reorganization Period, 1934-1953
- Termination and Relocation Period, 1953-1968
- Self-Determination Period, 1975-Present

Essential Understanding 6: History is a story most often related through the subjective experience of the teller. With the inclusion of more and varied voices, histories are being rediscovered and revised. History told from American Indian perspectives frequently conflicts with the stories mainstream historians tell.

Attempts to assimilate indigenous peoples into Euro-American society included considerable efforts to change their ways of life and this included efforts to wipe out their musical traditions. The story put forth in the film RUMBLE is an excellent example of the untold history of how American Indian people had a major impact upon what we know now as Rock and Roll.
PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

- Show students the trailer for RUMBLE: THE INDIANS WHO ROCKED THE WORLD and have students identify film themes and ideas addressed in the trailer.
  - Who is being interviewed?
  - What is the conflict/issue presented? In a larger group have students discuss the effectiveness of the trailer as a hook to the story the film presents.
  - What does the title, RUMBLE, seem to suggest just by viewing the trailer?

- Trailer link here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hovJUoyxulc

START A CONVERSATION AROUND FOOD:
Ask students: What are your songs? Why? What instruments are being used? Is there music that you associate with particular holidays, memories, celebrations, or events? What is the significance of these songs? (Encourage students to think about how music functions in rituals from religion, to “Star-Spangeled Banner,” to “Happy Birthday”)

VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Expository Writing Practice with RAFT Activity (Worksheet on Page 13)
Expository writing exercises help students understand the construction of reality/stories told through nonfiction film. RAFT, an acronym for Role Audience, Format, and Topic (an activity from John Golden’s book Reading in the Reel World) helps students understand how audience, purpose, and mode of expression affect word choice and crafting story structure

RAFT Components:
- ROLE--This is the persona taken on as you compose or deliver your piece (student, historian, parent, inanimate object, animal, etc.)
- AUDIENCE--This is who will receive your piece (fellow student, a teacher, a lawyer, tribal member, etc.)
- FORMAT--this is the form you’ve chosen to use to communicate your ideas (letter, pamphlet, poem, diary entry, social post, etc.)
- TOPIC--this if the topic or purpose of your piece (to inform, to sell, to convince, to protest, to warn, etc.)

- EXAMPLE:
  RUMBLE
  Role: Expository film
  Audience: Individuals unfamiliar with the roots of traditional tribal music and modern popular music
  Format: Documentary Film
  Topic: To inform viewers on the Indigenous influence that is present in modern day music through rhythm, tonality, phrasing, and attitude
DOUBLE ENTRY CHART + DISCUSSION

*Worksheet attached (Page 13)

As students watch the film have them take notes in the attached Double/Entry Chart provided to have students remember specific moments in the film. After watching, ask students what they wrote down:

- What moments stood out to them?
- Was there anything in the film that changed what you knew or what you thought you knew?
- Many documentaries are also narrative, meaning they tell stories! How do we articulate certain histories through a good story?
  - (Bring this back to the film. From which perspective is the film’s story told? Do they narrate? How much time are watching versus listening? Make a list!)

SUPPORTING AN EFFECTIVE DISCUSSION:

To most effectively track learning throughout viewing and discussion, have students reflect on what they know about the issues being presented in the films. With their Double Entry viewing chart they will have written down observations and inquiries. The following is a short list of keys terms and vocabulary to help students articulate their analysis:

KEY TERMS (to sound like a professional):

EXPOSITION: the information that grounds you in a story (Who, What, Where When, and Why). Exposition gives us the tools to follow the story as it unfolds.
  - Questions to ask students:
    - What information is given away?
    - What still don’t we know?
    - Who are we hearing from/who is interviewed (who is not?)?
  - Examples of Expository Information:
    - Shot of a place/location and its landmarks
    - Headlines/printed materials
    - Voice over
    - People getting upset over something
THEME: A recurring idea that illuminates an aspect of the human condition. The theme is the most basic lifeblood of a film, it tells you what the film is about. This differs from the subject, which is the topic of the film. A theme gives a story/subject focus and depth and brings out universals from the subject of a complex/simple film subject. A good theme should have multiple layers: personal level, political level, or spiritual level.

- Questions to ask students:
  - What are the universal ideas behind the film?
    - Ex: History told from American Indian perspectives frequently conflicts with the stories mainstream historians tell. With RUMBLE this film addresses that histories can be rediscovered and revised, especially when those histories are often one-sided in their telling.

SUBJECT: the topic/focal point of the film
- Questions to ask students:
  - What is the general subject of this film?
    - Ex: The history of traditional tribal diets and incorporating them back into modern day practices

ARC: the ways the events of the story transform the subject/character
Story arcs can be hard to find in documentary film, there is not always an obvious beginning, middle, and an end (as in life!)
- Questions to ask students:
  1. What does the protagonist/subject learn about themselves as they pursue a goal?
  2. How has the film challenged your assumption about the film’s subject? Did you have preconceived notions of who the characters were/where they came from? Did this film change your opinion on this subject matter?

PLOT + CHARACTER:
- CHARACTER-DRIVEN: film where the action of the film emerges from wants and needs of the characters
  - Questions to ask students:
    1. Who is this film about? Is it about a person or an event?
- PLOT-DRIVEN: characters are secondary to the events that make up the plot
  - Questions to ask students:
    1. Who is this film about? Is it about a person or an event?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOTICE</th>
<th>WONDER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write down details, or quotes from the film that stand out to you. Who’s being interviewed? Are there animations? Is this happening now or is it recounting something in the past?</td>
<td>What does this make you think? Write down observations, questions, or comments you might have related to what you wrote down in the NOTICE column.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Original</td>
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<td>-------</td>
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<td>Audience</td>
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