

Welcome to *Cuesheet*, a performing arts guide published by the Education Department of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, DC. This *Cuesheet* contains activities and information to share with students before and after attending the performance of Guy Davis: *Stories and Songs of the Blues*. Teachers need not have a background in music to use this *Cuesheet*.

This *Cuesheet* contains

Four Teacher
Information Pages:

Introducing the Blues,
page 2

Language and the
Blues, page 3

Your Concert
Experience, page 4

Meet the Blues, page 5

Three reproducible
Student Activity Pages:

Blues Words, page 6

Blues Story, page 7

Being Part of the
Audience, page 8

Select activities that best suit your needs and time constraints. Photocopy and distribute one page per student for each activity.

Guy Davis

Stories and Songs of the Blues

Introducing the Blues

At the concert, Guy Davis performs traditional blues music and stories. He plays the guitar and harmonica, old-time blues instruments. Introduce students to blues music's roots using Student Activity Page 5.

Activity:

Meet the Blues

Invite students to examine the pictures on Student Activity Page 5 as you read and discuss the following text.

Ask students to look at Picture 1. Read aloud:

"The blues is a style of music. African-Americans living in the southern United States created the blues over 100 years ago. Many people who created blues music lived in a region called the Mississippi Delta. Their music is sometimes called the Delta blues. Look at the map of the United States and find the Delta — the triangular-shaped region where the Mississippi River flows into the Gulf of Mexico."

Ask,

"Why is early blues music sometimes called the Delta blues?" (People living in the Mississippi Delta region created early blues music.)

Ask students to look at Picture 2. Tell students:

"The oldest blues expressed hard times and suffering. People created blues musical styles while working hard. Early blues musicians made their own musical instruments because they could not afford to buy them."

Ask,

"What are the workers in Picture 2 doing?" (Picking cotton)

Ask,

"Why did early blues musicians make their own instruments?" (Instruments were too expensive.)

Ask students to look at Picture 3. Read:

"Guy Davis is a professional musician living in New York City. He studies to learn about blues styles of the past. We will hear Guy Davis play old-time blues music at the Kennedy Center."

Ask,

"What style of music does Guy Davis play?" (Old-time blues)



harmonica



Lonnie Johnson

Resources

Enjoy blues music with recordings by:

Blind Lemon Jefferson
Lonnie Johnson
Bessie Smith
Muddy Waters

Read:

Jones, B. and Hawes, B.L. *Step It Down: Games, Plays, Songs, and Stories from the Afro-American Heritage*. New York: Harper and Row, 1972.

Silverman, Jerry. *Traditional Black Music: Children's Songs*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1993.



Bessie Smith

Language and the Blues

Blues Words

At the concert, students hear words used in unfamiliar ways. Blues artists like to play with words. Introduce students to blues words. Ask students,

“What does it mean to feel blue?” (Feeling blue means feeling low or sad.)

Activity:

Feeling Blue

Materials Required: crayons or colored pencils, blank drawing paper

Invite students to draw a picture about a time when they felt blue.

Ask students,

“What did you do to stop feeling blue?”

Explain,

“When blues musicians feel blue, they sing and tell stories about how they feel.”

Activity:

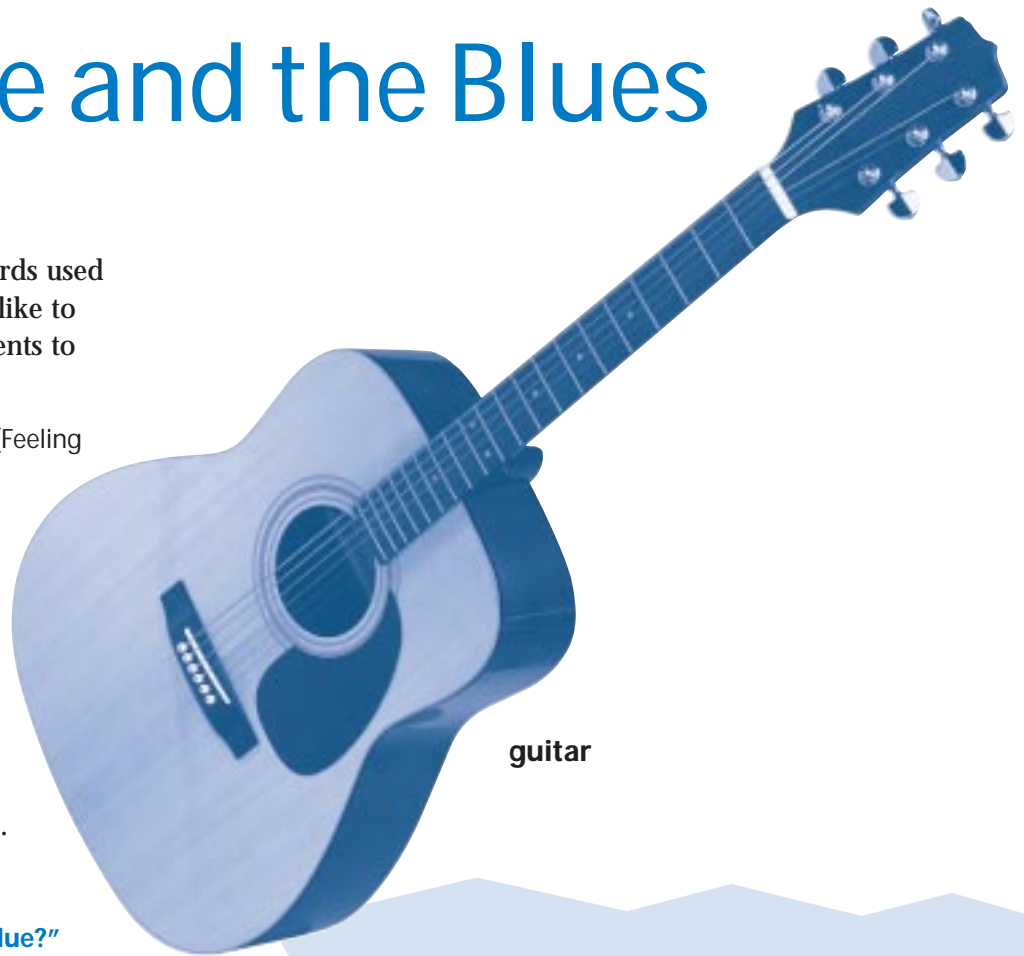
Blues Words

Distribute reproducible Student Activity Page 6.

Tell students,

“When blues musicians create songs and stories, they like to play with words.”

Direct students to read the “Blues Phrases” and their “Meanings” on the activity page. Ask students to write a sentence using each blues phrase.



guitar

Blues Story

At the concert, Guy Davis tells stories and plays sound effects with his guitar and harmonica. Introduce students to sound effects with the story “Madison and the Pigs.”

Activity:

Blues Story

Distribute reproducible Student Activity Page 7. Direct students to look at the “Sound Effects” key on the activity page. Tell students:

“We will create three different sound effects for the story, ‘Madison and the Pigs.’”

Ask students to select one sound effect for each picture in the key. Tell students:

“Although the blues grew out of hard times and suffering, blues songs and stories are not always sad. Like the story ‘Madison and the Pigs,’ many blues songs are funny. Now I will read the story ‘Madison and the Pigs.’ Read along and create the sound effects we selected when you see them in the story.”



Your Concert Experience

Going to the Kennedy Center

Tell students:

"Guy Davis: *Stories and Songs of the Blues* is performed at the Kennedy Center. The Kennedy Center was named to honor John F. Kennedy, who was President of the United States about 35 years ago. The Kennedy Center is a place where many people go to see and hear performances of dance, theater, or music. The Kennedy Center has six theaters. You will hear the concert in the Theater Lab."

When you enter the Kennedy Center you will walk into the Hall of States. It is called the Hall of States because flags of the 50 states and Washington, DC hang high above you. To get to the Theater Lab, you will ride inside a large elevator to the Kennedy Center's top floor. A large banner that says 'Theater Lab' hangs on the wall outside the theater. In the theater, an usher will direct you to your seats."



Kennedy Center

Activity:

Being Part of the Audience

Before the concert: To prepare students to participate in the concert, reproduce and read together reproducible Student Activity Page 8, "Being Part of the Audience."

After the concert: Lead students in a discussion about the concert and their role as audience members.

The Concert:

What instruments did you hear?

What parts of the concert did you like best?

What new things did you learn?

The Audience:

How did the audience know it was time for the concert to begin?

Did the audience quietly listen to the concert?

Did anyone make it difficult for you to pay attention to the concert? If so, what did that person do?

What would you tell other students to help them be good audience members?

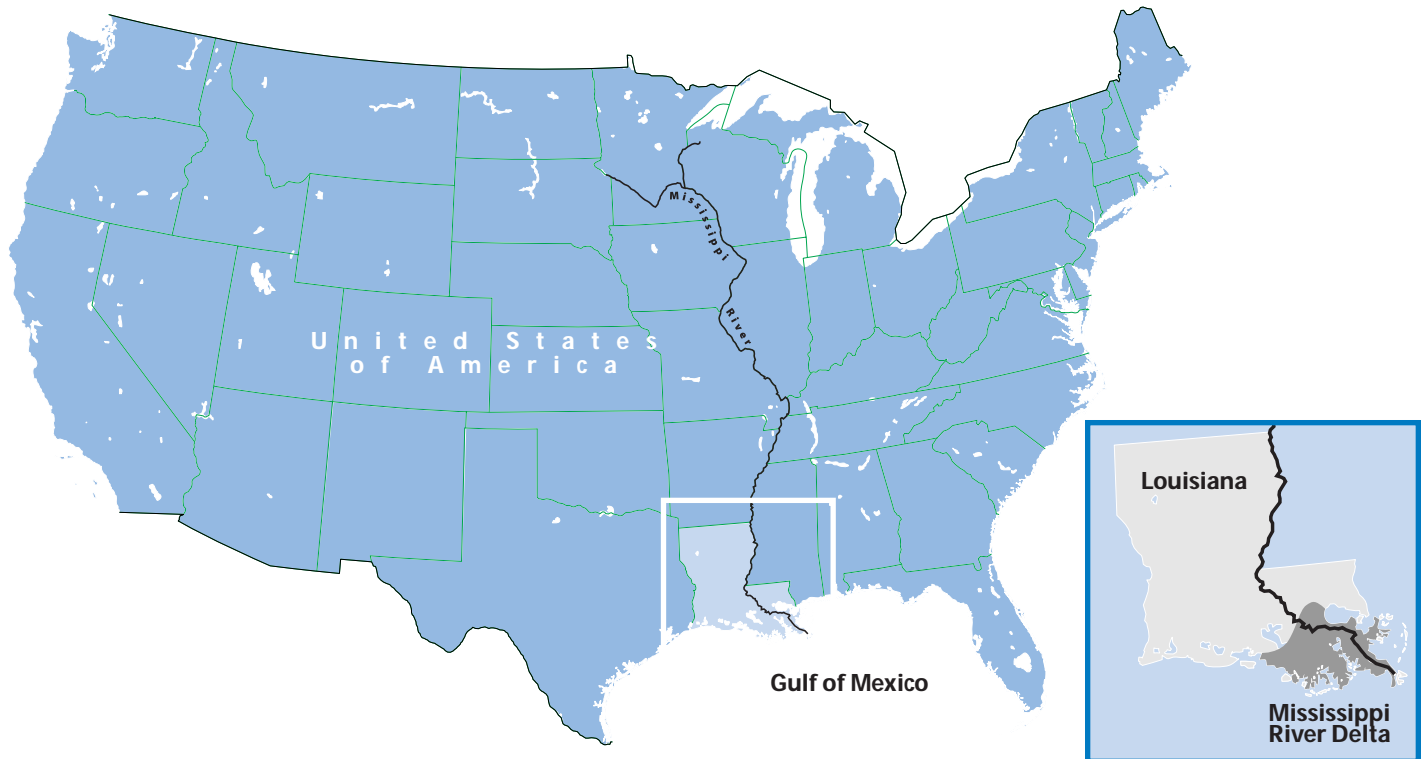
Activity:

Remembering the Concert

Invite students to draw a picture to remember the Kennedy Center or the concert.

Meet the Blues

1. The Mississippi Delta—Birthplace of the Blues



2. Hard Times and Hard Work



3. Guy Davis

Blues Words

I'm in a blue mood.

I feel blue.

I've got the blues.

Blues Phrases

blue

high water

bone orchard

jelly bone jelly

Meanings

sad

flood

graveyard

girlfriend

Write a sentence using each blues phrase.

1.

2.

3.

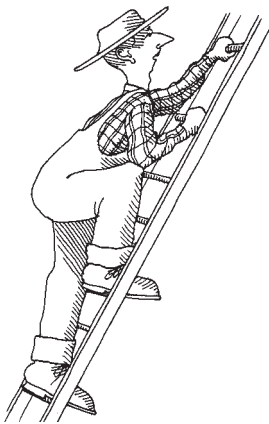
4.

Blues Story



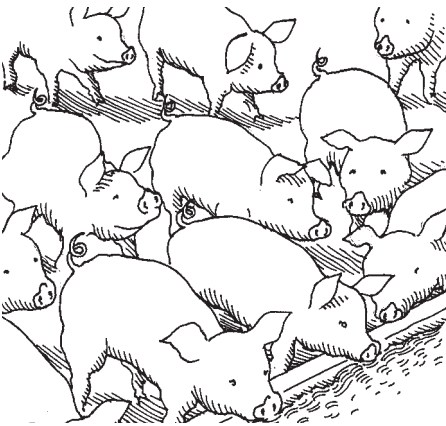
Sound 1

Madison calling the Pigs



Sound 2

Madison climbing a ladder



Sound 3

Pigs eating supper

Madison and the Pigs

Madison was a farmer who kept pigs in his yard. One evening he called the pigs to tell them to come home for supper. **1** But no pigs came.

He looked around and decided to call the pigs again. **1** Still, no pigs came.

Madison climbed to the top of the house. **2** When he was standing on the roof, he looked around. He saw the pigs at the edge of the farm, near the woods.

He called the pigs from the roof of the house. **1** He kept calling and calling. **1** Finally, the pigs began to come home.

That evening Madison had not just his pigs, but every pig in the county, eating supper in his yard. **3**

Being Part of the Audience

Directions:

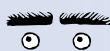
Use this key to read about going to a concert.



concert



audience




watch



listen



clap

When you go to a , you

are part of the . The

 is an important part of

the . Before the 

begins, the lights in the Theater Lab

dim and go out. At this time the

 becomes quiet.

During the , 

and  carefully. If you talk,

people in the  will not

be able to .

When the  ends,

 if you liked the .



The Kennedy Center

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