



WORLD MUSIC



Y9 – Lesson 4

Learning objectives

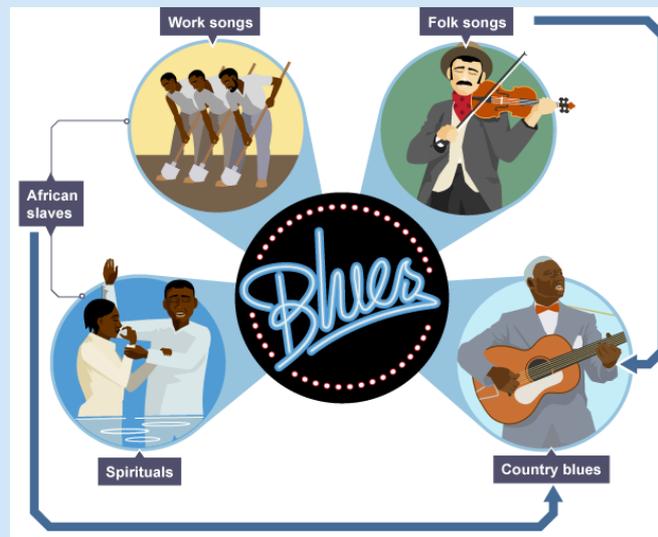


- I will know about the origins of blues music by exploring work songs and spirituals.
- I will understand the features of blues music.
- I will be able to play a 12-bar blues with a walking bass line.

The origins of blues music



- African slaves brought their musical traditions with them when they were transported to work in the North American colonies. Early types of African American music included **spirituals** (religious songs using vocal harmony) and **work songs**.



Work songs

- **Work songs** were sung rhythmically in time with the task being done. They used **call and response** in which phrases from a lead singer were followed by the other singers. African music combined with the **folk music** of the white European settlers to produce new styles of music.
- Long John - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4G5KtQynWvc>



The Slave Trade

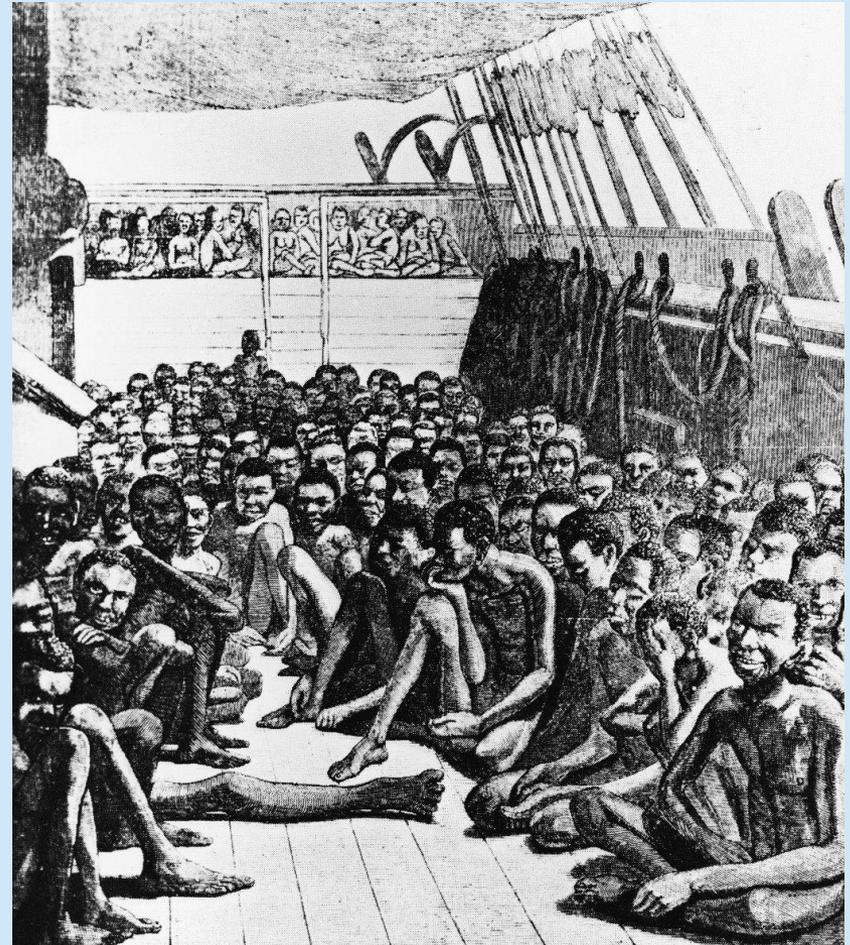


TO BE SOLD, on board the
Ship *Bance-Yland*, on tuesday the 6th
of *May* next, at *Afbley-Ferry*; a choice
cargo of about 250 fine healthy

NEGROES,
just arrived from the
Windward & Rice Coast.
—The utmost care has
already been taken, and
shall be continued, to keep them free from
the least danger of being infected with the
SMALL-POX, no boat having been on
board, and all other communication with
people from *Charles-Town* prevented.

Austin, Laurens, & Appleby.

N. B. Full one Half of the above Negroes have had the
SMALL-POX in their own Country..



Spirituals and work songs

- Spirituals and work songs, rooted in both the slavery era and the West African societies from which most African-American slaves were originally taken, provided cultural sustenance to African Americans in the midst of intense racial oppression.
- They first came to be valued by northern white audiences in the late-19th century. Later, folklorists began collecting (and eventually recording) traditional southern music.
- John and Alan Lomax recorded southern musicians (African-American, white, and Mexican-American) for the Library of Congress.



Spirituals and work songs



- They recorded “Long John,” a work song, sung by a man identified as “Lightning” and a group of his fellow black convicts at Darrington State Prison Farm in Texas in 1934.
- Black prisoners working in gangs to break rocks and clear swamps relied on the repeated rhythms and chants of work songs (originating in the forced gang labor of slavery) to set the pace for their collective labor.
- “Long John” mixed religious and secular concerns, including the notion of successful escape.



The Blues



- The blues emerged towards the end of the 19th century. This early style of blues was known as **country blues** and was usually a solo singer accompanied on guitar or piano sometimes with added harmonica or drums.
- Well-known country blues musicians include Lead Belly, Blind Lemon Jefferson and Robert Johnson.

The Blues



- Until the end of the 19th century, America was largely a rural community. In the early 20th century large numbers of people started to move to industrial cities.
- After the Civil War and the emancipation of slaves, the blues spread, together with the people who sang and played it.
- Many former slaves moved from the cotton fields of the southern states to northern cities such as Chicago and Detroit, where the blues became hugely popular.

Listen...



[The Blues Brothers - Sweet Home Chicago - 1080p Full HD – YouTube](#)

- Which instruments play at the very start of the piece?
- Name another instrument you can hear.
- Describe the tempo of the piece.
- What can you tell me about the order in which the lyrics are sung?

The 12 Bar Blues Pattern

Walking Bass Line

C-E-G-A-Bb-A-G -E

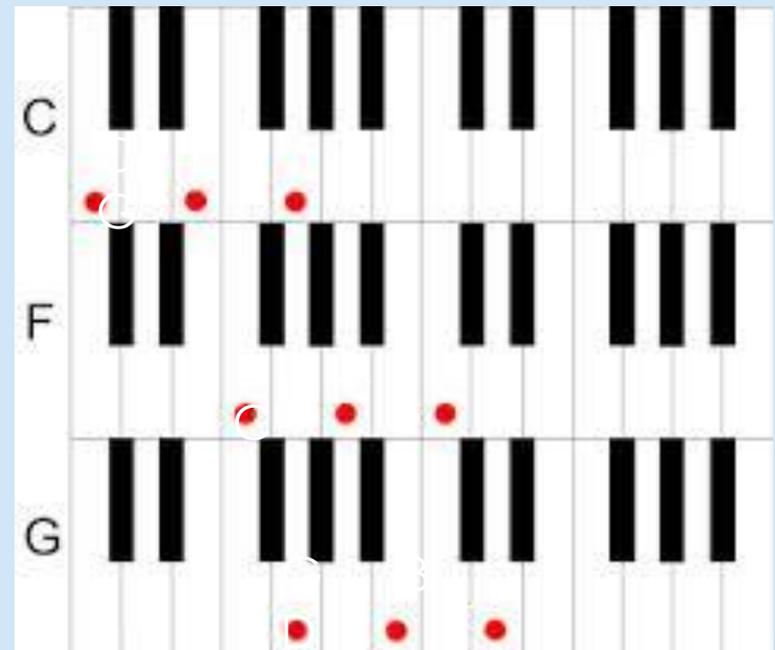
C-E-G-A-Bb-A-G -E

F-A-C-D-Eb-D-C-A

C-E-G-A-Bb-A-G -E

G-B-D - F-A-C

C-E-G-A-Bb-A-G -E



<https://www.musicca.com/piano>

