



The Legacy of the African-American Spiritual: Student Exercises - Segment 3

Segment 3: Spirituals as Resistance

The spiritual is celebrated in American culture and beyond. It is the source from which gospel, jazz, blues and hip hop evolved. It was born in the American South, created by slaves, bards whose names history never recorded. The organizing concept of this music is not the melody of Europe, but the rhythm of Africa. And the theology conveyed in these songs is a potent mix of African spirituality, Hebrew narrative, Christian doctrine, and an extreme experience of human suffering.

Key Terms and Topics

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- *Comparing musical traditions of spirituals and gospel*
- *Examining modes of resistance during slavery*
- *Examining power of storytelling*