



The Legacy of the African-American Spiritual: Student Exercises - Segment 4

Segment 4: Universal Appeal of Spiritual

Critical Thinking

1. How does the music that Joe Carter sings apply to the conversation about dignity, spirituals and religion?
2. What message do the spirituals get across to Mr. Carter? To you?
3. What stance does Joe Carter take on musical forms such as Blues and Rap? Why?
4. Explain the connection between ‘dignity’ and spirituals.
5. What musical style was promoted over spirituals? Why?
6. What is the significance of the song by Jessie Anthony that is played during this segment?
7. What role does music play in conveying experiences? How should music and stories be used in the study of history?
8. How does music shape cultural identity? How does it represent cultural values?
How should the United States honor the story of slave resistance and the chapter of slavery in American history?

Research Challenges

Joe Carter speaks about how music reflects the values of a culture. Listen to and then study the lyrics of four songs that are on popular radio today. What values are these songs reflecting? Do you find any common trends in what the songs are about? Why do you think these songs are about these values? Do these songs represent our culture well? Explain. Finally, how are current songs similar or different to the spiritual?