

MUSIC OF US

LEWIS-HOUGHTON CIVICS AND DEMOCRACY INITIATIVE



Rep. Amo Houghton

Rep. John Lewis

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

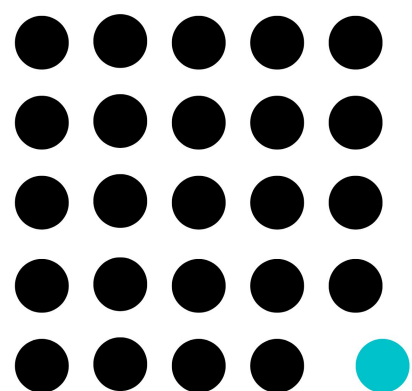
TEACHING WITH **PRIMARY SOURCES**

Consortium Member
Lewis-Houghton Initiative

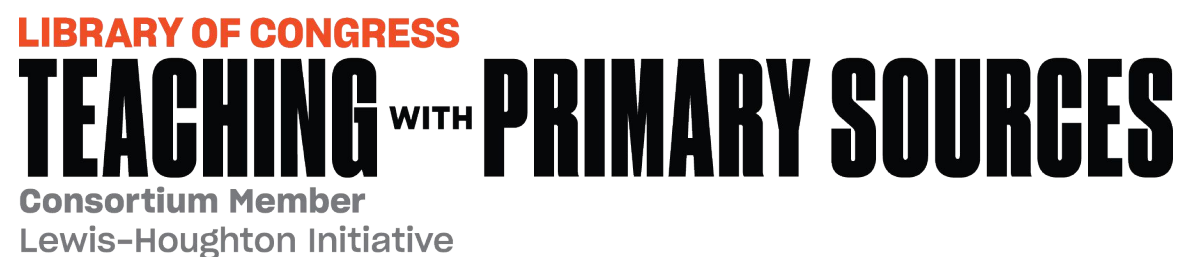
www.musicofus.org



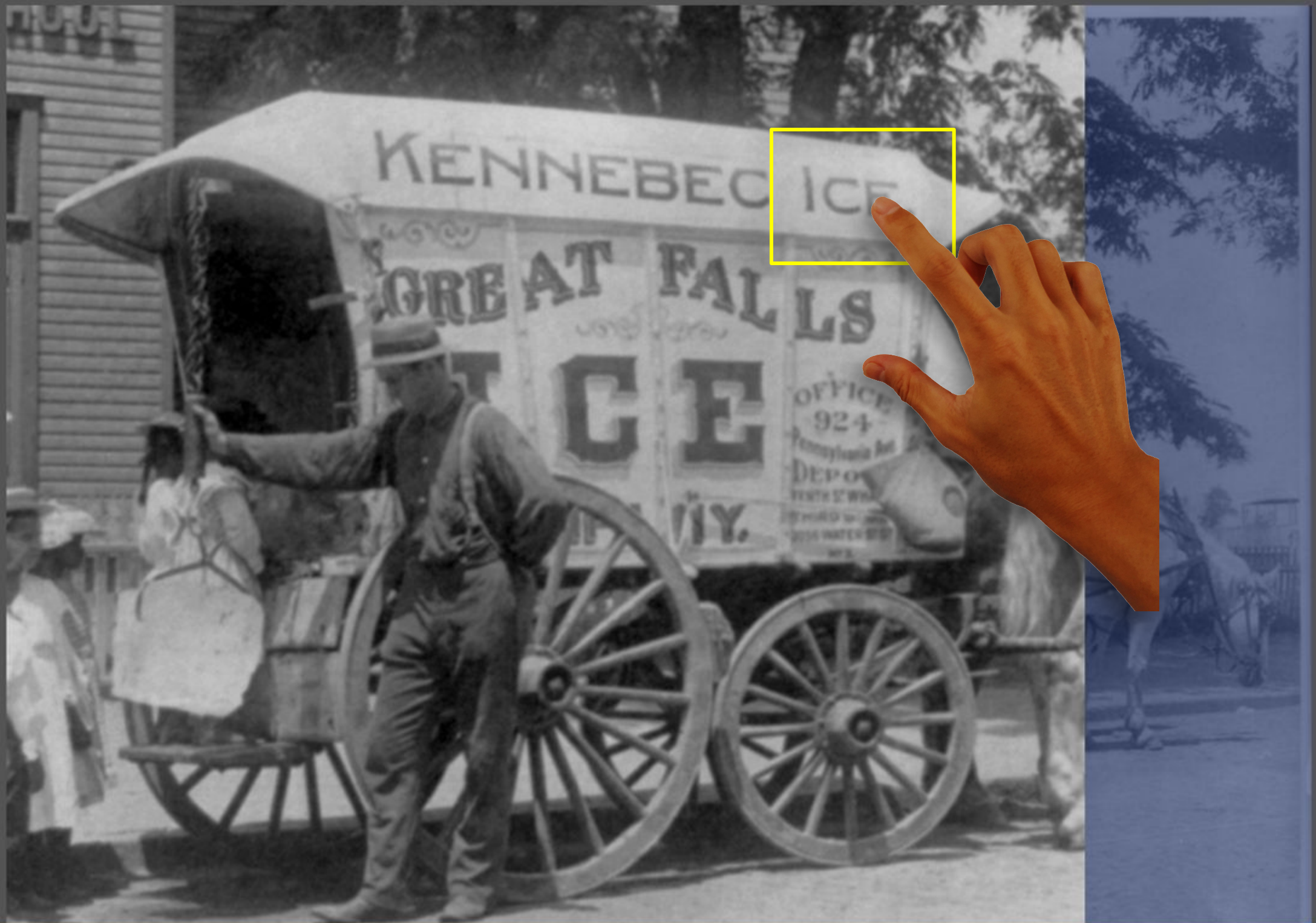
TOOJ



Time Out of Joint



KidCitizen



I like how you used your careful observation skills to find the word ice. There is a second word ice on the cart. Find it and tap on the word.





Let's explore this photo of the 369th Regiment band, playing for wounded soldiers.



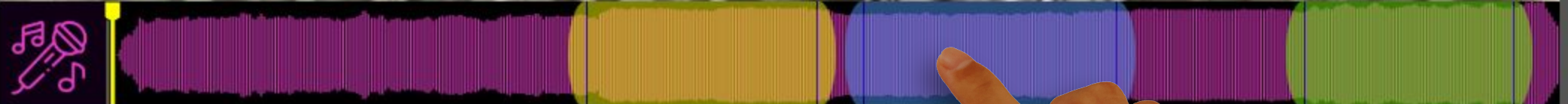
As the 369th band played for soldiers and the wounded, Europeans got their first listen to the beginnings of "Jazz".



00:00:00





Tap the highlights to hear some of the jazz elements of what they might have been playing.



00:00:00





Music of US




In *Far Away Blues*, Clara and Bessie are alternating lines, in a style known as "Call and Response" - which is an important part of Blues music.

Tap on Clara when you hear her singing.



Clara Smith

Bessie Smith





What have you taken from this verse about their experiences?

Type your thoughts on that here.

We don't know why we are here
Don't know why we're here
But we're up here just the same
Just the same
And we are just the loneliest
Loneliest
Girls that's ever born





In this interlude, can you hear Fletcher and his orchestra stretching for something new - something syncopated and exotic?





Tiger Rag
Original Dixieland
Jazz Band

Do Doodle Oom
Fletcher Henderson
& his Orchestra

King Porter Stomp
Fletcher Henderson
& his Orchestra



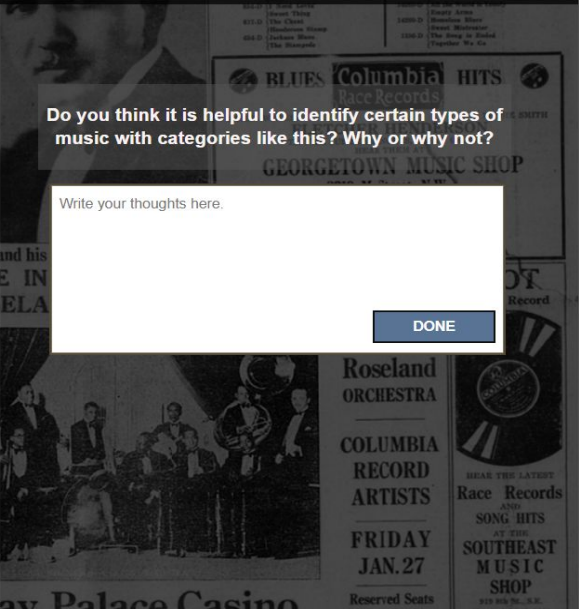
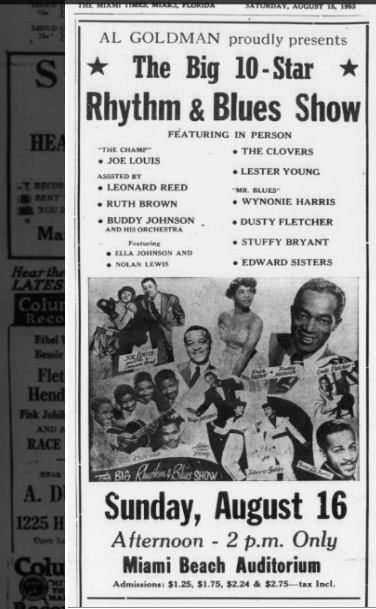



It wasn't until the late 1930s that the music industry began to move away from the term "Race" records, when music by Black artists took on another name: "Rhythm and Blues".

Do you think it is helpful to identify certain types of music with categories like this? Why or why not?

Write your thoughts here.

DONE





Music of US EPISODES

Interactive Episodes where students explore U.S. History and Civics through important music and musicians and their times.



Far Away Blues

Explore a 1920s blues song about leaving home to find a better life, and the Great Migration. Sung by Clara Smith and Bessie Smith, two of the biggest singing stars of their era.



Fletcher Henderson: Architect of Swing

Discover how this singular musician broke through music industry segregation to influence popular music across the country and the world.

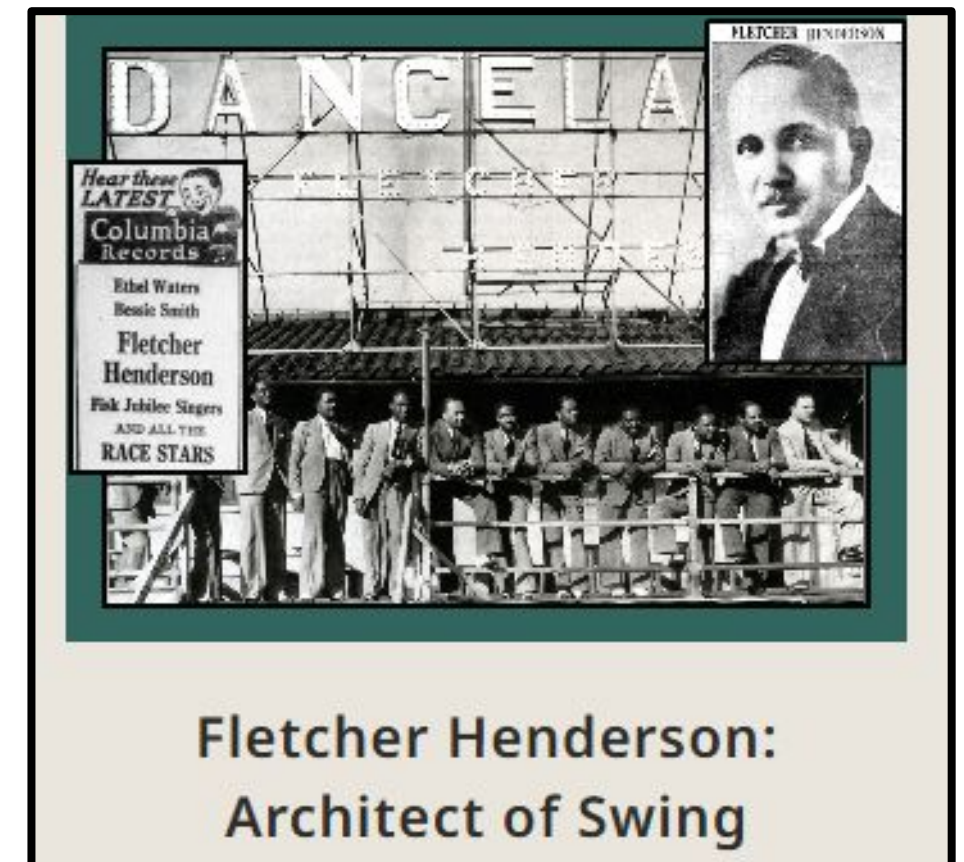


James Reese Europe & "Castle House Rag"

Students explore how one musician served his community, his country, and helped introduce the world to jazz.

Music of US EPISODES


- Standards aligned
- Cloud based
- Runs on all devices



Music of US TEACHER GUIDES

- Music of US Teacher Guide, *and*
- Teacher Guides for for each Episode, providing:

- Overview
- Guiding Questions
- Implementation Tips
- Primary Source Citations
- Background Resources



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Music of US Teacher Guide. At the top is the Music of US logo. Below it is the title "Music of US Teacher Guide". A large image shows a group of people in a historical setting, with the text "A new way for middle & high school students to explore our nation through music, using primary sources from the Library of Congress." Below this is a section titled "About Music of US" which describes the project's funding and purpose. It also mentions that each episode includes important music, music reflected and contributed to the rich fabric of U.S. history and culture, and that the project plans to include a Builder App. A "Technical notes" section at the bottom states that the episodes run in a web browser and will work on PCs, Macs, and tablets, and provides the website URL <https://www.musicofus.org>.

About Music of US

Music of US is a project made possible thanks to funding from the [Library of Congress Lewis-Houghton Civics and Democracy Initiative](#). The purpose of this project is to provide educational learning experiences for middle and high school students to increase their understanding of United States History and Civics using music and other primary sources from the Library's digital collections.

In each Music of US Episode, students discover important music, music reflected and contributed to the rich fabric of U.S. history and culture, and music that has been passed on to themselves and society today.

Down the line, Music of US plans to include a Builder App that allows students to create their own Episodes with music they have created or chosen, showing connections between music and their lives and communities.

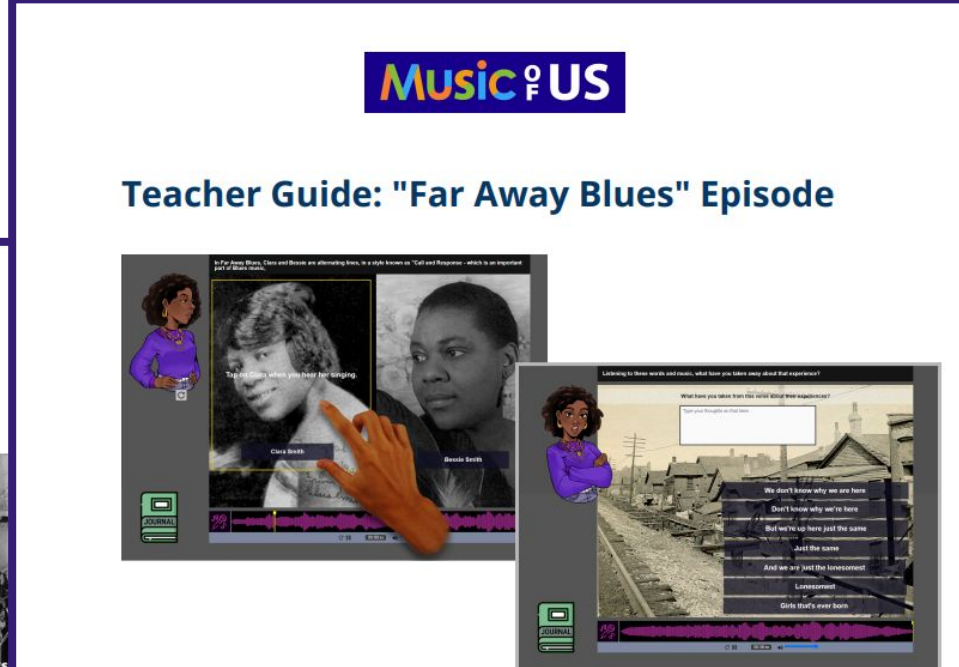
Technical notes

Music of US Episodes run in a web browser and will work on PCs, Macs, and tablets. (While it can technically work on phones, it's not designed for small screens).

Teachers and students can access Episodes from the Music of US website: <https://www.musicofus.org>.

Music of US Teacher Guide v.02-25

Page 1



The screenshot shows the Teacher Guide for the "Far Away Blues" episode. At the top is the Music of US logo. Below it is the title "Teacher Guide: 'Far Away Blues' Episode". Two images are shown: one of Clara Smith and Bessie Smith singing, and another of a historical photograph of a street scene. Below these images is a section titled "Episode Overview" which describes the song "Far Away Blues" as recorded in 1923 by Clara Smith and Bessie Smith, and mentions the song's composer, Fletcher Henderson. It states that students will take a deep dive into the song to learn about the Great Migration, Blues music, and these two independent women. A section titled "There are two branches to explore:" lists two options: "The Great Migration" and "Clara and Bessie Smith and the Blues". It then states that in each branch students will interact with the music and associated primary sources to explore insights into the song (lyrics), the singers, and the historical, civic, and social contexts of the times while also reflecting on personal and contemporary connections.

Teacher Guide: "Far Away Blues" Episode

Episode Overview

"Far Away Blues" is a blues song recorded in 1923 by singers Clara Smith and Bessie Smith and musician Fletcher Henderson, the song's composer. In this episode students take a deep dive into the song to learn about the Great Migration, Blues music, and these two independent women, both towering figures of popular 1920s music.

There are two branches to explore:

1. **The Great Migration:** Through the lyrics and music, students connect to the Great Migration, and how these musicians experienced and expressed it.
2. **Clara and Bessie Smith and the Blues:** Far Away Blues brings together two of the biggest stars of their day, singing together. What can we learn about them and their times through their voices and history?

In each branch students interact with the music and associated primary sources to explore insights into the song (lyrics), the singers, and the historical, civic, and social contexts of the times while also reflecting on personal and contemporary connections.

"Far Away Blues" Episode Teacher Guide v. 02-25

Page 1

Music of US EPISODE BUILDER

APP & CURRICULUM

- Students work with a project-based curriculum
- Use the Music of US Builder App to create their own online Episode
- Featuring music that they choose or create.

The screenshot displays the Music of US Episode Builder app interface. At the top, a navigation bar includes tabs for Buddy characters, Buddy messages, Items, Music Highlights, Sound Files, Scoring, Triggers, Navigation, Settings, and Export. Below this, a 'Slides' panel on the left shows a list of slides, with slide 21 selected. The main workspace features a large image of a jazz band with a yellow selection box around a central figure. To the right of the image, a 'Display Area' panel shows settings for 'Orch and Redman Zoom 1', including a name field (Don Redman), an 'Item to Display' section with 'Choose Item' and 'Autofill Item' buttons, and a dropdown menu set to 'Don Redman'. Below the image, a 'Music Sets' panel lists tracks like 'Tiger Rag Clip1' and 'Do Doodle Oom Clip 1'. A central audio player shows a waveform, a play button, and a timestamp of 00:06:00. The bottom of the interface includes buttons for 'Choose Icon', 'Choose Music file', and 'add track'.



Fletcher Henderson: Architect of Swing



Available soon at musicofus.org/episodes/fletcher-henderson

Discussion and Questions

Connections to History and Civics to strengthen? or add?

Where might this fit into your curriculum?

How could it fit better?

Split to two Fletcher Henderson Episodes?

- Overcoming categories to create a new popular music in the 20s
- Resilience in the Great Depression



What next – thoughts & requests

Share with teachers who should see this...

...or who might be interested in the Episode Builder program

Got more topic or music ideas for us? (Pass them on to Bert.)

Interested in piloting the new episodes?

...or the Episode Builder program? (Reach out to Bert.)

snow.bert@gmail.com **www.musicofus.org**

Journal for Branch 1



Journal Page 1



What is something about this ad that stands out to you?

It's very expressive, with lots of slang. It feels like they are talking to me as if I know how great Armstrong is.



Tiger Rag
Original Dixieland
Jazz Band



King Porter Stomp
Fletcher Henderson
& his Orchestra



Do Doodle Oom
Fletcher Henderson
& his Orchestra

What do you hear in "Do Doodle Oom" that sounds like a step toward "King Porter Stomp"?

It's got a smoother, more orchestrated sound, less jumpy and crazy.

Do you think it is helpful to identify certain types of music with categories like this? Can you think of an example of this being done with music today?

It's helpful for selling it --but it can limit artists. "Country" today - Beyonce is stretching it, and not everyone likes it. And Spotify suggests what we like based on algorithms.

How did Fletcher Henderson help change the popular music of his time, and what were some obstacles he needed to overcome to do so?

Write your thoughts on this question

DONE



Journal for Branch 2



Journal Page 2

Original
melody

Piano
swinging

Brass and
Saxophones

Rhythm
section

Full band

What do you think were the most important changes Henderson made to "Blue Skies" in his arrangement?

Splitting the melody up between different instruments, then having them bounce off each other.



Can you think of an artist today who has been resilient in difficult times - and still made great art?

Type your answer here.

DONE