

Playing the Blues in General Music

Presented by Jim Tinter (jimtinter@gmail.com)

This workshop is a practical session on helping students experience a 12 bar blues by singing, moving playing, and improvising on recorders and C instruments. It is **not** about the historical background of blues music. And remember, you don't have to *have* the blues in order to *sing* or *play* the blues!

- I. Musical People - TBA - Tuneful, Beatful, Artful (may not be literate)... John Feierabend
- II. **Flea trainers** place limits and restrict opportunities. **Fleaberators** take the lid off the jar and liberate the fleas!
- III. E-I-E-A-GO! — Equip, Inspire, Excite, Achieve, Go! (unleash yours and your students personal creativity)
 - A. Equip kids (notes, rhythms, articulations, etc.), inspire each other, get excited, achieve and GO! (Leave the jar)
 - B. Once kids are equipped, then they can use their imaginations to improvise.
- IV. Improvisation
 - A. Traditional model
 1. Scales, arpeggios, chords in 12 keys, modes, altered scales, blues scales.
 2. Listen, copy licks, transcribe solos from original recordings.
 3. Jam sessions, play along recordings (Aebersold, etc.), scat singing.
 - B. AeberOrff — Aebersold approach + Orff process = “An easy, safe, and friendly, authentic improvisation experience for children and adults.”
 1. TBA, sing, speech, movement, Boomwhackers, instruments; pentatonic/modal/blues scales, solo echo patterns, easy solo examples, solo accompaniment tracks.
 2. Solo echo patterns provide a foundation for improvising by introducing increasingly sophisticated patterns of notes, rhythms and articulations to build vocabulary and provide fertile soil for imagining.
 - a) Provide simplified process for any beginner, regardless of age.
 3. When improvising, what you can do: 1) repeat, 2) hold out, 3) rest, 4) move up or down by step or skip, 5) use chromaticism.
 - a) All of the above can be made more expressive by articulation and dynamics.
 - C. Points to remember. Here are five of the 128 found on Aebersold's website: jazzbooks.com
 1. Two biggest fears: 1) getting lost, 2) playing the wrong note.
 2. Jazz players usually play eighth notes.
 3. Articulation is a very important part of jazz.
 4. Chord symbols have two dimensions — horizontal (scale), vertical (chord).
 5. Written music is a crutch. Memorize instead. “*Playing by ear makes it easier to play from the heart.*”
- V. “Big Mouth Blues” — 12 bar blues in A. Big band swing. Simplified blues scale (1, b3, 4, b7, 5), (A, C, D, E, G) the same as A minor pentatonic. Introduce C# and C natural.
 - A. Introduce song with teacher led movement activity. Teacher/class, then with partners. Introduce form, solo example, how to build an arrangement, promote beatfulness.
 1. v1 — Beat motions: I - pat/clap; IV - clap/partner/clap/partner, etc.); V - high 10 (clap or snap both hands overhead). Solo 1: listen to solo (A, G, C) and snap on 2 and 4. Solo 2: listen to more advanced solo, clap on beat 4 like rim tap (solo adds two pitches D and E, organ added to orchestration). v1 — sing lyric (melody doubled with vibraphone); v2 — sing lyric and add body percussion (horn part added, dynamics louder). Tag: repeat last four measures, end on B (9th of chord, or re), wiggle hands by head.
 - B. Lyric: *We dig the blues, the Big Mouth Blues. We groove and we move and we play the blues. (repeat) Easy to play, C, B, A, we're diggin' the Big Mouth Blues. Yeah!*
 - C. Chord progression: I I I I IV I I V IV I I (the simplest form of the 12 bar blues. Other variations are prevalent).
 - D. Solo echo patterns: sing on “doo,” or on scat syllables. Play on recorders or mallets.

12 Bar Blues Tunes (Pop & Rock):

- “At The Hop,” Danny & The Juniors. *Rock N' Roll Era: 1957*
“Bama Lama Bama Loo,” Little Richard. *Masters Of Pop Music - Lucille*
“Barbara Ann,” (Single Version), The Beach Boys. *Sounds of Summer*
“Green Onions,” Booker T. & The MG's. *Billboard Top Rock 'n' Roll Hits: 1962*
“Hard Headed Woman,” Elvis Presley. *Elvis 30 #1 Hits*
“Hound Dog,” Elvis Presley. *Elvis 30 #1 Hits*
“Lucille,” Little Richard. *Masters of Pop Music - Lucille*
“Peppermint Twist (Part 1),” Joey Dee and The Starlites. *Billboard Top Rock 'n' Roll Hits: 1962*
“The Twist,” Chubby Checker. *Cameo Parkway: The Best of Chubby Checker, 1959-1963*

12 Bar Blues Tunes (Blues):

- “Let the Good Times Roll,” B.B. King. *The Best of B.B. King*
“Every Day I Have the Blues,” B.B. King. *B. B. King*
“Dust My Blues,” Elmore James. *House of Blues: Essential Blues (Disc 1)*
“Killing Floor,” Howlin' Wolf. *House of Blues: Essential Blues (Disc 1)*
“Otis in the Dark,” Otis Spann. *House of Blues: Essential Blues (Disc 1)*
“32-20 Blues,” Eric Clapton. *Me and Mr. Johnson*
“Pride and Joy,” Stevie Ray Vaughn. *Texas Flood*

This session partially sponsored by:



Big Mouth Blues

Score Jim Tinter

1 *mf* 3 **Swing!** A^7

2 *mf* 3 **Play on repeat only**

3 *mf* 4 5 6 7

4 **D7** **A7** **E7**

5 **D7** **A7** 14 15 16 1. 2.

6 **A7 Solos*** **D7** 18 19 20 21 22 *D.S. al Coda with repeats*

7 **A7** **E7** **D7** **A7** 23 24 25 26 27 28

8 **Coda** **E7** **D7** **A7** **A9** *Opt.* *f* *ff* 29 30 31 32 33

* Solos: The solo notes given are based upon a simplified blues scale and correspond to the notes used for the solo/echo patterns.

References:
recorderman.com

jazzbooks.com

pbs.org/jazz/nowthen/index.html

Poliniak, Susan. "Jazz, A Beginner's Guide."

Teaching Music. April, 2011. Volume 18, Number
6:33-38.

Books w/CD's by Jim Tinter:

A Minor Melody

B-A-G Bossa Nova

Big Mouth Blues

Dinosaur Rap and Rondo

Jingle Bells in 10 Flavors

VFX