

## Lambert, Hendricks, and Ross, *Moanin'*

### Payin' Your Dues - Middle School level, grades 6-8

#### **Objectives:**

1. The student will identify the use of call and response in the recording.
2. The student will discover the difficult life of many jazz musicians.
3. The student will identify characteristics that make this song a blues.

#### **Optional Objectives:**

1. The student will read about hard times of jazz musicians and listen to additional recordings on this web site that explains how hard it was to be a jazz musician during the Great Depression. [http://www.pbs.org/jazz/time/time\\_depression.htm](http://www.pbs.org/jazz/time/time_depression.htm).
2. The student will read an online essay about why musicians today still experience hard times. <http://www.jazzbeat.com/html/freereport.html>.

**Time:** One or two class periods.

#### **Materials Required for Objectives:**

Computer access to Internet recording, speakers for playback to class (or individual headphones for students to listen on their own).

#### **Procedure:**

**Activity 1** – “Listen to the recording *Moanin'* and listen for call and response. One singer tells the story and the others respond ‘Yes, Lord’ much like a church gospel choir might sing. What is the mood of the song? Why do you think he is moaning?”

**Activity 2** - Jazz musicians almost always go through hard times as they work to be discovered and become successful. In older days, musicians rode to dances and club dates on a bus with no heat or air conditioning. If the musicians happened to be black they were frequently refused the use of hotels, bathrooms, and places to eat. African American musicians who performed at white hotels, ballrooms, and clubs were often made to enter through the back door and were not allowed to eat or stay at the hotel. Musicians traveling in the South had to be careful not to break the unwritten rules of Jim Crow or they could be arrested or even lynched. Women had a hard time traveling with all-male bands. There was no privacy and it was hard for women to get dressed and apply make-up.

**Activity 3** - Listen to *Moanin'* again and try to decide if it is a blues. What do you hear in the music that made you decide it was or wasn't a blues?

#### **Optional Activities:**

**Activity 4** - Students will explore this website:  
[http://www.pbs.org/jazz/time/time\\_depression.htm](http://www.pbs.org/jazz/time/time_depression.htm)

What did you learn about hard times for musicians in the old days?

**Activity 5** - Students will read this web site: <http://www.jazzbeat.com/html/freereport.html> about hard times for musicians these days. How did hard times change and how are they the same for musicians “payin’ their dues”?

**Extension:**

Try to investigate hard times among musicians in other types of music. Do symphony musicians experience paying their dues and hard times? How about musicians who play for musicals? Musicians on television?

**Indicators of Success:**

Students can describe the difficulties musicians went through to be working musicians.

**Learn more about Lambert, Hendricks, and Ross:**

<http://www.ralf.org/~colomon/vocalese/lhr.html>

<http://www.mp3.com/lambert-hendricks-&-ross/artists/35863/biography.html>