

## *We Be Doinit*, Quincy Jones

### Jammin' to Jazz - Intermediate level, grades 3-6

#### **Objectives:**

1. The student will identify bass and drum sounds.
2. The student will identify scat solos.
3. The student will sing the ostinato introduced at the beginning of the recording.
4. The student will sing chorus part.

#### **Optional Objectives:**

1. The student will transfer ostinato to bass xylophone or other appropriate instrument.
2. The student will scat sing.
3. The student will create a rapped part for new verses.

**Time:** One to three class periods.

**Materials Required for Objectives:** Computer access to recording on the Internet and speakers for playback to class. Optional: Bass xylophone or other appropriate bass-sounding instrument (synthesizer, piano, or bass Boomwhackers).

#### **Procedure:**

**Activity 1-** Before listening to recording explain to students that *a cappella* means voices without any instrumental accompaniment. The recording has no instruments in it but the singers make sounds like instruments. Ask students to listen for sounds that sound like instruments and identify which instruments the singers are imitating. Listen to *We Be Doinit* by Quincy Jones. Ask students which instruments they thought the singers were imitating. The students should identify bass and drums. If they don't hear them, ask them to listen again and tell them to watch you and you will give a "thumbs up" when there is an instrument sound. Play the recording again. Pause the recording and see if they can identify the instrument sound. Ask the students to raise their hands and demonstrate the sounds they heard. Continue until bass and drums are identified and imitated. Allow all students to try to imitate the sounds they hear, encouraging them to use their ears to match what they hear on the recording.

**Activity 2-** Scat singing. Students will hear the singers scat singing about halfway through the recording after the second chorus of *We Be Doinit*. Ask the students to identify the scat solos by holding a "thumbs-up" in front of them when they hear scattling. Ask students if they think those solos were imitating instruments and what the instruments might be. Play the scat solos as many times as students need to hear each part and again encourage students to try scat parts themselves. (If the students are not used to doing this, it is a good idea to let the whole class do it at the same time so there is comfort in trying it out as a group as opposed to solo.)

**Activity 3** - Learn the ostinato. At the beginning and several times during the recording an ostinato is sung. Explain to students that an ostinato is a repeated pattern, and ask them to listen carefully to the ostinato to see if they can learn it by ear. You may need to repeat the beginning of the recording where the ostinato is the most isolated for them to learn it. Encourage them to use their ears to figure it out (jazz singers need to develop strong aural skills and this activity is designed to do that). Ask for one student to demonstrate the first phrase of the ostinato and if correct the class then should echo it. Refer back to the recording to get all the nuances. It might also help to clap or thump hand on chest to 2 and 4 to feel the syncopation. Do the same thing with the second phrase. It will help if you can show the contour of the phrase with your hand but remember to encourage the students to figure it out by ear. Refer to the recording to help.

**Activity 4** - Teach the chorus part:

We be doin' it, ah doin' it.  
We be slammin', we be jammin' on the one.  
We be doin' it, yeah doin' it.  
We be groovin', usin' what we got and why not, 'cause it's hot.

Refer to the recording to help students learn it by ear but show the lyrics to help with identifying the correct words.

**Activity 5** - Divide the class into bass ostinato and chorus parts. Everyone singing the chorus part should also clap or thump hand on chest on 2 and 4, or if students have trouble doing both, create a third part that claps or thumps on 2 and 4. Practice the entire arrangement by cueing in the chorus every so often. Ask students to focus on feeling a groove as they sing and clap/thump.

### **Optional Activities:**

**Activity 6** - Transfer the ostinato to bass xylophone or other appropriate bass- sounding instrument. See attached notated part but encourage students to transfer the ostinato by figuring out the part by ear on the instrument. Notes for the ostinato are G, D, F, and high G.

**Activity 7**- Students who are comfortable with scat singing can develop short scat solos that imitate instruments. Ask the class to identify what instrument the student was imitating in the scat solo and how they were able to recognize it.

**Activity 8** - Have students create rapped verses that complement the spirit of the song, *a cappella* jazz singing. Alternate the rapped verses with sung chorus parts and scat solos. Encourage students to develop an arrangement and try several out. Video or audio tape different arrangements and encourage students to watch/listen to tapes to evaluate the different arrangements and decide which ones are most effective.

### **Extension:**

Ask the class to listen to the words of the recording to try to figure out what the singers are referring to. The entire recording is about singers being able to imitate and create their own music and the fun involved with singing all the parts.

**Indicators of Success:**

Students will sing their own arrangement of *We Be Doinit* with a solid groove. Students will identify and experiment with scat singing.

**Additional Resource:**

Margaret Fitzgerald, Kimberly McCord, and Shelly Berg, *Chop-Monster, Jr.: Jazz Language Tutor for General Music Instruction*. Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Publishing Co., 2003. Practice scat singing with activities and recordings included.

**Learn more about Quincy Jones:**

<http://www.achievement.org/autodoc/page/jon0bio-1>