

## **“The Rhythm of Political Campaigns”**

### **LESSON PLAN**

High School Level

**Lesson developed by: Michael R. Stevenson, Choral Director, Dickinson High School (ND)**

This plan could be used in High School Music Classes (Choir/Theory/Composition/Appreciation), History Classes (Politics/Teddy Roosevelt/election campaigning), and English Classes (poetry/literary propaganda).

The lesson can be used as enrichment, and thereby be molded into whatever length the teacher wishes, or can be extended to unit length.

National Standards for Music Education:

- Standard 1, Sing along, or with others
- Standard 3, Improvising Melodies
- Standard 4, Composing and arranging music
- Standard 5, reading and notating music
- Standard 6, Listening to, and analyzing music
- Standard 8, understanding the relationship of music to other disciplines
- Standard 9, understanding music in its relationship to history and culture

North Dakota Social Studies Content Standards:

- Standard 2, Students understand important historical events
- Standard 4, Students understand the development and forms of various political systems
- Standard 6, Students understand the importance of culture, group and individual identity

English: Writing standards W.7, W.8, W.9

“I can” statements

- I CAN identify a campaign song.
- I CAN write a Campaign song.

The teacher will need access to examples to be used from the Theodore Roosevelt Center Website, and materials for creating both written and musically composed projects.

Useful sites:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Campaign\\_song](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Campaign_song)

<http://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/>

For examples used in this lesson:

When Teddy Comes Marching Home [sheet music](#) [recording](#)

Grand Campaign March Song in Admiration of Roosevelt [sheet music](#)

Lyrics to the Tune of JOHN BROWN'S BODY [lyrics](#) [sheet music](#)

They are Calling from the Mountains, "We Want Teddy!" [sheet music](#)

Introduce the concept of Campaign Music.

Have students read the Wikipedia article. Discuss characteristics that need to be part of a campaign song.

Have students sing through or listen to the examples of Campaign Music from the time of Theodore Roosevelt. Further discussion of characteristics of a campaign song. Students are led to discover: repetition, simplicity of melody, humor, stressing of important traits, and many more discovered traits.

Return to Lyrics to the Tune of JOHN BROWN'S BODY. How does this song fit into the discovered Characteristics?

- Familiar Song...everybody knew it
- Constant repetition of Roosevelt's Name
- Humor... get the "Teddy" smile.
- It is VERY short and easily remembered

Have students individually, or in groups, either go through the other three songs that have been used, or go to the Theodore Roosevelt Center site and select a new song, and explore and note the characteristics of a campaign song.

Have students quickly share their findings with the class. If the other three, already mentioned songs were used, have the students compare and contrast differences that groups using the same song may have found.

### ***Lesson Enlarged***

Lead the students in discussion of modern campaign practices. Are modern politicians using these types of Campaign items? There are many sites which can be googled to take students to areas where they can discover current politicians' campaign music.

As a final project/homework assignment, organize the class into small groups, or assign as an individual project. Have the students compose an original tune, that fits the criteria of a campaign song, and then assign words that would make the song about "Teddy", or a current political figure, or themselves, or someone in their group.

For students that may not be musically advanced, use an already composed piece that would fit the criteria, (ex. America, Mary had a Little Lamb, Twinkle Little Star, the chorus of Battle Hymn

of the Republic), and then continue writing words for that tune. History classes may wish to make this project about Theodore Roosevelt, and compose a NEW campaign song for “Teddy.” English classes may wish to concentrate more on the poetry of the song and forgo the composition. (e.g. Scan the lyrics of a current simple song for rhythm and meter. If the metric feet and rhythm of the original song, and the new lyrics, are the same, it will fit with the song that the original example was derived from.)

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