

Rumble on the High Plains Unit
Activity #2 - Cultural Connections
Teacher's Guide

Objective:

Students will reflect on the meaning of the word "Rumble" and express how it relates to his or her understanding of *Rumble on the High Plains* in at least 10 sentences.

Standards Addressed:

MU:Re8.1.E.1a Explain and support interpretations of the expressive intent and meaning of musical works, citing as evidence the treatment of the elements of music, contexts, (when appropriate) the setting of the text, and personal research.

Materials needed:

- Paper to journal
- Audio of *Rumble on the High Plains*
- John Macallister Chorale 2
https://www.johnmcallistermusic.com/uploads/2/4/7/2/24727629/symphonic_war_m-ups_-_2016_edits.pdf

Warmup:

1. Ask students to make a list of emotions (mournful, hopeful, anxious, angry, etc.)
2. Pick one and ask the students to play the McCallister chorale 2 (or any tuning/warmup chorale being used) as if they were feeling that emotion and needed to express it to someone in the audience.
 - a. Students should do so without drastically changing articulation and should maintain good tone and breathing throughout
3. Continue this exercise with 2 or 3 more emotions
4. After each emotion, discuss what students changed in their playing to convey a particular emotion or feeling.
 - . Make notes on the board under each selected emotion.

Activity:

The purpose of this activity is to allow students to make their own connections between the culture and history of Kansas and the word "Rumble" as it applies to the piece. Before students are assigned the activity, the instructor will pull up the program notes about the composer's inspiration. Sweeney gives 8 examples suggested by students about how the word "Rumble" relates to the piece. Here are the reasons:

1. Approach and passing of a thunderous storm on the plains
2. Thunder of buffalo herds in the early times
3. Covered wagons crossing the prairie landscape
4. Civil and political unrest dividing the state in the 1800s
5. Expansion of the railroads rumbling westward
6. Low roar of B-29 war planes serviced in Pratt during WWII
7. Distant rumble of combines and trucks as fields of wheat are harvested
8. Underlying pioneer spirit of perseverance, triumph, and celebration

For this activity, students will either pick one of the reasons above, or come up with their own, and journal about how their definition of “Rumble” perpetuates throughout the piece. They will also journal on the significance of the event or landscape and how it shares the events and characteristics of Kansas.

Assessment:

Journal Assessment and Rubric

	0	1	2
Student wrote 10 sentences	Student wrote less than 5 sentences.	Student wrote 5 sentences or more	Student wrote 10 sentences
Student defined the word “Rumble”	Did not define the word “Rumble”	Defined the word “Rumble”	
Student explained the significance of their definition of “Rumble”	Explanation not present	Student referenced the significance but did not expand on their ideas	Student offered well explained reason
Students explanation referenced its significance to the character and landscape of Kansas	Did not reference Kansas	Kansas is referenced in the significance explanation	
		Total:	