Pre-K – 2nd Grades

Lesson 1 — God Bless America

Objective

Students will learn to sing the patriotic song *God Bless America*. Students will explore the purpose and function of patriotic songs.

Suggested Materials

- Music and lyrics for God Bless America (provided)
- Word Bank (provided)
- Optional: Recording of *God Bless America* (audio links can be found at youtube.com/user/BfloPhilharmonic)

New York State Arts Standards

- 1 Creating, Performing, and Participating in the Arts
- 3 Responding to and Analyzing Works of Art
- 4 Understanding the Cultural Contributions of the Arts

New York State Social Studies Standards

- 1 History of the United States and New York
- 5 Civics, Citizenship, and Government

Common Core Learning Standards for ELA & Literacy

Reading, CCR 1, 2 and 6 Writing, CCR 4 and 9 Speaking & Listening, CCR 1, 2, and 3 Language, CCR 1, 3, 5 and 6

Procedure

- 1) Play and/or sing the chorus of the American patriotic song, *God Bless America* written by songwriter Irving Berlin. Is this a familiar song to students?
- 2) This is a patriotic song. Discuss with students what the function of a patriotic song could be. When do we sing patriotic songs? Why do you think we sing them? How do they make you feel?
- 3) The title and main lyric of this song, "God Bless America," came from a phrase that Irving Berlin's mother used to say expressing how thankful she was that she was able to escape to America from the violence in her home country of Siberia. This is an important theme in the history of our country the United States has served as a safe place for people from around the world to escape from dangerous and oppressive situations.
 - Ask students to think about what they are thankful for. If they wrote a song about it, what words (lyrics) would they choose? What would the music sound like? Would it be fast or slow? Loud or soft? Bright or dark? Choppy or smooth? Use the provided Word Bank for inspiration.
- 4) Practice singing the song with students so that they will be comfortable singing along with the BPO at the concert!

Learning Extension:

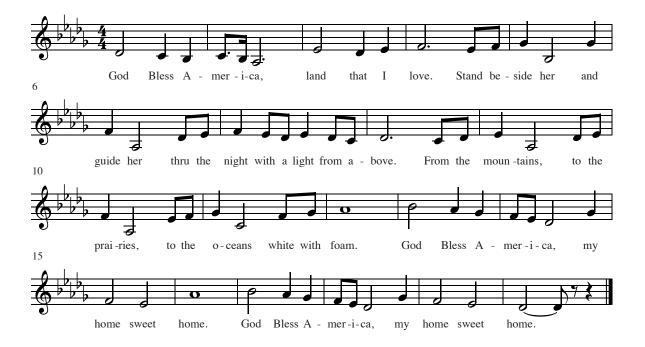
Expand on #3 by asking students to write a new song individually, or together as a class. First create the lyrics for the song (what are we thankful for) using the Word Bank provided for inspiration. Then try **beatlab.com** or **incredibox.com** for free sound-mixing software. Compose a tune to go along with the lyrics. Perform and share your work!





God Bless America

Music and Words by Irving Berlin



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WORKSHEET

Name ____



Quiet
Slow...
Smooth
Dark
Minor
Triple
Still
Cold

Add your own words to this list			

