

SEL Competencies and Standards Activities

Musician Information

NAME:	Maa Vue
ABOUT THIS MUSICIAN:	<p>Maa Vue is a Wausau-based singer and songwriter who bridges Hmong language and traditions with contemporary music-making. Maa grew up in Green Bay and credits a high school solo performance of “Respect” by Aretha Franklin as the first time she let her voice shine and found her love for musical performance. After high school, she worked for a few years and cared for her family, but realized that she wasn’t spending time on her true passion—music. She decided to refocus and launched a YouTube channel featuring her own original songs, which are sung in the Hmong language. She grew a huge following on the platform, and in 2013 she signed an album deal with California-based record label, Yellow Diamonds Records. Maa released a second album in 2016, and went on a national tour in 2017, before becoming president of the record label. In her career as a musician, she has used her voice to connect with her family and culture to keep the Hmong language alive.</p>
CULTURAL IDENTITY:	Hmong
MUSIC GENRE	Contemporary music in the Hmong language

IN RE/SOUND:	
SONG:	"Txiv Lub Xim Xaus" ("Father's Violin")
ABOUT THE SONG:	In this song, Maa honors her father and his passion for playing the xim xaus, a traditional Hmong string instrument. Maa also reflects on how time with your loved ones should be cherished.

Learning Goals

SEL Learning Goals

By using project resources, learners will:

1. Identify the values of their culture.
 - a. "I can name three values of my culture and why I know they are values."
2. Identify how they express their emotions.
 - a. "I can share which emotions are easy for me to express and which emotions are difficult for me to express."

SEL Standards

Organization	Standard
Wisconsin Social and Emotional Learning Competencies	Emotional Development: Learners will be able to provide support and encouragement to others through perspective taking, empathy, and appreciation for diversity. (CASEL Domain: Self Management)
American School Counseling Mindsets and Behaviors	Behavior Standards: Social Skills

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - B-SS4: Empathy - B-SS10: Cultural awareness, sensitivity, and responsiveness
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Lyrics for "Txiv Lub Xim Xaus" (Father's Violin)

Txhua zaj nkauj kuv tau hnov
(Of all the songs I've heard)

Pheem muaj ib zaj kuv nco
(There is one I always miss)

Tsis muaj lus tsis muaj suab
(It has no words, it has no voice)

Tsuas yog nco thaum npaum suav
(Only in my dreams do I remember)

Xyov npau suav puas yog tiag
(But is this dream even real?)

Tau los pom kuv txiv ib pliag
(Dreamt of seeing my father for a moment)

Yog sib ntsib hauv npau suav
(If we only are to meet in dream)

Kuv yuav ntsia kuv txiv tsis dhuav
(I will never grow tired of looking at my father)

Txawm cim tsis tau lub ntsej lub muag
(Even though I can't recognize the features of his face)

Cim tau lub suab raj kuv txiv qoj
(I recognize the instrument that my father plays)

Xim xaus, xim xaus
(Violin, violin)

Qoj kuv txiv zaj nkauj
(Play my father's song)

Xim xaus, xim xaus
(Violin, violin)

Thaum tsis muaj txiv lawm
(If when there is no longer Father)

Leej twg yuav nco mloog
(Who will remember to listen?)

Thaum tseem me thaum tseem yau
(When I was little, when I was young)

Txiv khwv nrhiav noj nrhiav haus
(Father worked and searched for food)

Txia ua kab ua noog cawm
(Transformed to bees and birds to

provide)

Tsis pub mob tsis pub ntshaw
*(Didn't let us fall ill, didn't let us long
for wants)*

Txiv lub suab hais lub luag ntxhi
(Father's voice gleams with laughter)

Lub suab raj no yog ntxiv li
(This instrument belongs to Father)

Peb ua neeg nyob mloog txiv lus
*(As we live our lives, listen to Father's
words)*

Vim suab raj no yog txiv tug
(For this instrument's voice is Fathers')

Txawm cim tsis tau lub ntsej lub muag
*(Even though I can't recognize the
features of his face)*

Cim tau lub suab raj kuv txiv qoj
*(I recognize the instrument that my
father plays)*

Xim xaus, xim xaus
(Violin, violin)

Qoj kuv txiv zaj nkauj
(Play my father's song)

Xim xaus, xim xaus
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Leej twg yuav nco mloog
(Who will remember to listen)

Affective Outcome and Strategies

Outcome: Students will explore how music can make them feel connected to their culture or family.

SEL Learning Goals :

By using project resources, learners will:

1. Identify the values of their culture.
 - a. "I can name three values of my culture and why I know they are values."
2. Identify how they express their emotions.

- a. "I can share which emotions are easy for me to express and which emotions are difficult for me to express."

SEL Extension: Maa Vue was able to reconcile some of the differences between the cultures she identifies with through music. She was also able to reconnect with her father through music. Students need to be able to identify their cultural values and how they express emotions in order to be able to reconcile the differences in cultural expectations that they will face. This activity is designed to help them practice identifying cultural values and how they express emotions.

Strategies:

1. Before starting any SEL Lesson, ensure that you are prepared to use, "protective interrupting." Protective interrupting is the instructional practice of stopping a student before they self disclose very personal information in front of their peers, while encouraging them to share that information with a trusted adult. Examples of phrases to use include:
 - a. Thank you so much for being willing to share your experience! To make sure we're able to do our activity, why don't you hang out after class and we can talk about it.
 - b. That sounds like a great example! I want to make sure I am really able to hear what you're going to share. Let's talk more about it after class.
2. ****NOTE**** If students disclose instances of abuse, self-harm, or a reportable event make sure you include your school counselor.
3. Introduction: Maa shares about how the expectations of her family and culture did not all fit the definition of who she wanted to be. She had to defy some of those expectations in order to be a musician. We all have to decide who we want to be as people, and how our culture's traditions and expectations are going to affect those decisions. It can be scary to discover that some of your ideas do not

fit into what your family wants for you. Maa experienced this with her father, but she still loved and respected him. By knowing her cultural values and personal goals, Maa was able to stay connected with her family while reaching her goals.

4. Today we are going to create a self portrait or a collage of images that shows all of the different values and expectations that you have in your life. In order to do that, you first need to know what values your culture has.
5. Pass out or show students the iceberg model that gives examples of different values cultures have.
 - a. Iceberg Model:
<https://wisconsin.pbslearningmedia.org/asset/c12c1a0a-9195-4124-93f4-230f10363a33/>
 - b. Discuss the different values. These questions may help:
 - i. What is the difference between the levels of values?
 - ii. Which values do you think affect people the most? Why?
 - iii. What does it mean to have a value that's, "unseen."
6. Pass out a blank version of the value Iceberg. Have students fill out the iceberg for themselves. Students should have at least 2 examples at each level.
 - a. Blank Iceberg Model:
<https://wisconsin.pbslearningmedia.org/asset/c12c1a0a-9195-4124-93f4-230f10363a33/>
 - b. In a different color, have students write values or goals they have at each level that may not fit the expectation of their families.
7. Having different goals or ideas than our families doesn't have to mean we don't fit within our culture (or families.) Maa was able to use music, the thing that she felt different about with her family, to connect to them and the culture

she was moving within. Even though Maa Vue's parents disagree with her working outside of her home, she still loves and honors them and cherishes her tradition. Her parents still love and support her as she develops her musical career.

8. Today you are going to create a self portrait. Using pictures from magazines, your own drawings, etc. you will create a self portrait that highlights the cultural values and personal skills that you have and cherish and the cultural values that affect you and you respect. Using the [self portrait template](#), put images and words that represent the cultural values and skills you have that you're proud of and use in the head. In the space outside of the head/face, put images and words that represent cultural values and influences that are a part of your life, but don't necessarily actively use—keeping in mind that you still value and respect them. For example, your family may view wearing makeup as immodest, however they let you choose what you'd like to do and you still wear makeup. So, in the face template you may want to draw on eyeshadow and on the blank space outside the face put a picture of someone not wearing makeup. You should have at least 3 examples inside the face and at least 3 examples in the blank space— use the iceberg model you just created.
9. Give students time to complete their portraits. Allow some to share what they created.
10. Reflect: Have students reflect upon how their cultural values and personal skills can help them grow and connect with their family (and others) even if they don't subscribe to every value. You can choose to use these questions as a class discussion or a journal reflection.
 - a. What could make having different cultural values than your family or friends difficult?
 - b. How can you use cultural values to connect with your family and friends, even if you don't agree?

- c. What is one thing you noticed about the “face” values versus the “blank space” values? What was surprising? What was difficult to think about? Why?

Assessment

1. Create a rubric that highlights “exemplar” work including:
 - a. A completed iceberg model.
 - b. 6 total examples of cultural values and personal skills.
 - c. Reflection (Either highlight participation or analyze the journal response.)

Resources

1. Additional resources to help reach the outcomes and strategies are provided at: <https://wsmamusic.org/re-sound/resources/>.
2. [Interview Transcript](#)
3. Musician Photos (see next page)



Maa Vue creates original musical compositions in the Hmong language.
Photo credit: PBS Wisconsin Education.



Maa Vue performing "Txiv Lub Xim Xaus" at the Weidner Center for the Performing Arts on February 22, 2020. Photo credit: PBS Wisconsin Education.



Vang Vue playing his xim xaus at the Weidner Center for the Performing Arts on February 22, 2020. Photo credit: PBS Wisconsin Education.