Anti-Racism in the Music Classroom:
An Educational Resource List for Music Teachers

Step 1:
Listen to Episode 3 of the New York Times' "1619" podcast for a 35 minute, well-constructed explanation of how American folk music came to be through the development of Blackface minstrel singers.

Step 2:
Read this article, published by NAFME in 2019, on "The White Fear of Taking Racist Songs Out of Music Education".

Step 3:
Read this list of songs steeped in racist beginnings, and click the links to learn more about each (alphabetized: please add more with appropriate links/evidence as you see fit)

List of Songs Steeped in Racist Beginnings:

1. Camptown Races
2. Canoe Song
3. Cotton-Eyed Joe
4. Dinah
5. Do Your Ears Hang Low?
6. Eenie, Meenie, Miny, Moe
7. Five Little Monkeys
8. I've Been Working on the Railroad
9. Jim Along Josie
10. Jimmy Crack Corn
11. John Kanaka
12. Johnny on the Woodpile
13. Jump Jim Joe
14. Oh! Susanna
15. Old Folks at Home
16. Old Dan Tucker
17. Pick a Bale of Cotton
18. Run, Children, Run
19. Shoo, Fly
20. Ten Little Indians
21. Turkey In the Straw
22. Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah

Let's also have awareness around:

-The origins of "Kumbaya", and how it was co-opted from the Gullah Geechee culture.
-"All The Pretty Little Horses", which was sung by enslaved Black women to their white mistresses' children- second verse is centered around Black mother's anxiety about leaving her own children

IMPORTANT RESOURCES:
Songs with a Questionable Past compiled by Lauren McDougle
Wikipedia's List of Blackface Minstrel Songs

Step 4:
Come up with a list of 5 replacement songs to teach concepts to students, like this teacher has started to do.

Personal Example: I used to use "Pick a Bale of Cotton" to introduce verse/chorus concept to kindergarteners. That can easily be replaced with "Going Over the Sea".

Step 5:
Read 2 or more items listed below.

- Published Articles on Racism in the Music Classroom:
  - http://act.maydaygroup.org/articles/Bradley6_4.pd
  - https://nafme.org/you-might-be-left-with-silence-when-youre-done/

- Blog Posts on Racism in the Music Classroom:
  - https://www.ethanhein.com/wp/2018/teaching-whiteness-in-music-class/

- Books on Anti-Racism in the Music Classroom:
  - Marginalized Voices in Music Education
  - Music Education for Social Change: Constructing an Activist Music Education

- More on American Folk Music's Roots:
  - On Stephen Foster:
    - https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/cant-escape-stephen-foster
  - On T.D. Rice:
    - https://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/jimcrow/who/index.htm
    - https://dancingmasters.com/jump-jim-joe/

- An Incredibly Helpful Presentation on Racism in Children's Music:
    - https://pocc.nais.org/PoCC/media/documents/Racism-in-Children-s-Music-Presentation.pdf
- GamePlan's edits to rectify racist content:
    - http://www.kid-sounds.com/images/ReplacementLinks/Official_statement.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3gdrxBp0AHr1Q8CtjT0dTMR5gSQU3KyTQ_D3agwDpQE75ufd7PSpyF6tY
- Decolonizing the Music Room's Website
    - https://decolonizingthemusicroom.com/

We can change the music classroom. What is more- we must. Don't keep doing it because "everyone else is doing it". A large part of anti-racism work is owning mistakes, which is where I am in this process. Please reach out to me with any questions/concerns at kristineley05@gmail.com.

Thank you,
Kristin Eley

ADDITIONAL HELPFUL RESOURCES

- Institute for Composer Diversity
- Leap Year Music- incredible Black educator and composer that will do Zoom calls with students!
- Putomayo Kids
- Beyond Elijah Rock: The Non-Idiomatic Choral Music of Black Composers https://www.mlagmusic.com/research/beyond-elijah-rock?fbclid=IwAR1I6GdD5lUcMWWuXEZZudFgcRPdMm-3RrmygXrLaefjvfRECoWSjj3zQxA

Sources:

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3. https://gen.medium.com/dinah-put-down-your-horn-154b8d8db12a
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