**EROSION BLUES Lesson Plan**

**Found on the internet: Elizabeth Peterson *The Inspired Classroom*** <http://theinspiredclassroom.com/2010/04/erosion-blues> **Notes:** The blues was meant to be a culminating project for our unit on Land and Water which focuses on erosion. Students were to explain a type of erosion (water, wind or ice) and use some content vocabulary to show they know the meaning of the words.

**Have students listen to and identify elements of Blues Music. Provide background information about the Blues: see** <http://www.pbs.org/theblues/classroom/essaysblues.html>

**Collaboration:** This can be a collaborative lesson with the music where he/she teaches the form of the 12 bar blues in music class.

**Freedom in Structure:**

The most common musical form of blues is the 12-bar blues. The term "12-bar" refers to the number of measures, or musical bars, used to express the theme of a typical blues song. Nearly all blues music is played to a 4/4 time signature, which means that there are four beats in every measure or bar and each quarter note is equal to one beat.

A 12-bar blues is divided into three four-bar segments. A standard blues progression, or sequence of notes, typically features three chords based on the first (written as I), fourth (IV), and fifth (V) notes of an eight-note scale. The I chord dominates the first four bars; the IV chord typically appears in the second four bars and the V chord is played in the third four bars.

The 12 bar blues creates one structure in which we sung our lyrics, but there is another structure that helped focus the small groups of 3-4 students to compose the lyrics. They follow a simple AAB form which means there is a line of lyrics (A) that is repeated (A) and then a different set of lyrics (B) completes a verse. The ends of lines A and B rhyme. For example:
A – Rivers can erode rocks, mountains and canyons wear away.
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B – It still erodes, no matter what you say!

**The After Effects:**
I asked my students to reflect on their experiences as we drafted, practiced and recorded our blues song. Here are some of their words:
“I thought it was fun because everyone had a lot of enery and was able to share it.”
“It made me feel special…made me feel musical and unique.”
“It was fun because when we sang the chorus, everybody was singing.”
“I want to do something like this again. The blues is fun.”

My students, in general, are excited about the blues. In fact I have two girls who are actively writing their own blues lyrics. One girl is presently writing her own “Moving Blues” about her family’s move to another house.

This lesson transitioned me from our TIC focus last month in “Creating Community” to this month’s “Freedom in Structure”. It was one of those experiences that fed off of my talents and those of my students: from the students volunteering to sing out loud to the boys in charge of the recording device (my netbook powered by Audacity). The smiles were big and the excitement was contagious. There was a lot of inspiring going on!

Here are all the links you may be interested in. Please check them out and leave your comments. I will share them all with my class.