**Blues Form and Harmony Lesson Plan Notes**

**Objective:**

Students will gain an understanding of the blues form and its variants through harmonic analysis, written work, and performance. Using Noteflight, student musicians will also create their own blues forms for use with their own musical groups.

**Time frame:**

The lessons can be integrated within a formal classroom setting as a stand alone project in an ensemble setting (jazz band, popular music group, etc.), as part of a larger unit plan in an AP/IB setting for form and analysis, or as the user sees fit. Length of the exercises will depend of the technical level of the student musician, and how deep the teacher wishes to go. (You can spend an entire semester or lifetime on just the 12 bar blues).

**Prior knowledge:**

Basic knowledge of chord construction and Roman Numeral analysis is needed to complete the worksheets (though not to play the blues). The exercises are most enjoyable when performed on instruments and felt in a live setting with a rhythm section and someone in the room who is knowledgeable in the style.

**Sequence:**

If the goal is to understand the theory only:

* Each exercise can be presented in class with the teacher having a daily preparatory theory exercise and daily audio example and/or listening guide
* Exercises can be completed in class or at home sequentially

If the goal is to understand and perform:

* Each exercise can be presented in class with the teacher having a preparatory theory exercise and audio example (preferably played live or live with a backing track/sequence)
* Exercises should be completed at home, brought into class using Noteflight on a device or printed), with the majority of class time used to play
* Take as long as your curriculum allows and go slow. All exercises do not need to be completed in the same time frame and can be used separately as scheduling allows. Many student ensembles assume that knowing the notes and chords is all there is. The greatness of the Blues is that it is easy to learn but takes a lifetime to master. Challenge them to critically assess themselves
* Leave time for improvisation and keep it enjoyable.
* Encourage learning by ear (especially for wind and string players) as is the way the style came about and is best internalized.

Feel free to send me a message if I can be of help or address any concerns:

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