

**The American Songbook**

**Lesson Plan Series**

**By Elizabeth M. Kendall**

**MICHAEL FEINSTEIN'S  
AMERICAN SONGBOOK**

**A New Step Every Day: 1920s–Early 1930s**

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**Lesson One: Episode Three**

(time needed: 50 to 60 minutes)

**Segment Title**

*A New Step Every Day*

**Lesson Title**

*It's the Great Depression – Let's Dance*

**Lesson Focus**

Overview: Survey of the times.

**Purpose**

Students will explore the dichotomy between socioeconomic groups and the popular trends in music and dance during the Great Depression.

**Objective**

Students will be able to:

- Compare current economy with the Great Depression.
- Discuss the effect social “mood” has on popular music.
- Perform a variation on The Charleston with proper rhythmic pulse.

**MENC Standard**

Content Standard #3: Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments

Content Standard #6: Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.

Content Standard #8: Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.

Content Standard #9: Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

**Cross-Curricular Tags**

History – The Great Depression

Performing Arts – Dance

**Materials**

# *The American Songbook*

## **Episode Three**

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### *The American Songbook Video: A New Step Every Day*

*Just the Facts* slide show

*The Charleston Step-by Step Handout*

Audio track “I’m Getting Myself Ready for You” by Cole Porter, performed by Emil Coleman and His Orchestra, Smith Ballew, vocals

OR performed by Blanche Calloway

(can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLSA4iTk8c0>)

Audio track “Let’s Misbehave” by Cole Porter, performed by Banjo Buddy

OR performed by Irving Aaronson and His Commanders

(can be found at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hm\\_ZnSvXn7c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hm_ZnSvXn7c))

*Charleston: Performance Rubric*

Computer with Internet and speakers

LCD projector, SMART board, or appropriate technology to view the computer screen

**Lesson Introduction** – Exploration into music’s role in society

(time needed: 7 to 10 minutes of class time)

1. Prior to this lesson, have students keep a log of different things they do to improve their mood.
  - 1.1. If On-Line instruction is available, this can be posted as a Discussion Question.
  - 1.2. If this is not an option, students can be given sticky notes for posting on a blackboard or bulletin board.
  - 1.3. Let the students have time to review classmates’ answers.
2. Discuss findings. If applicable, point out instances where music or dance plays a part.
3. Show the brief *Just the Facts* slide show. Set the tone that this was a very hard time in American history.

### **Learning Activity**

(time needed: 15 to 20 minutes)

1. Show the opening 7 to 8 minutes of *The American Songbook Video: A New Step Every Day* as it discusses how people of this time did not have the technology to bring the music to their homes; they had to go to where the music was to be entertained.
2. Return to topic of dance, saying that The Charleston was very popular during the Depression because of its happy and light-footed performance.
3. Teach the class how to dance The Charleston.
  - 3.1. There are many videos available on-line demonstrating The Charleston, particularly at <http://www.britishpathe.com>.
  - 3.2. Hand out *The Charleston Step-by Step*.
  - 3.3. As a class, review the steps of The Charleston while playing “I’m Getting Myself Ready for You”

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## **Episode Three**

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### **Reinforcing Activity**

(time needed: 20 to 30 minutes, depending on class size and number of groups)

1. Explaining how, with any dance style, there's always room for interpretation. Help students explore possible variations to the basic step.
2. Divide class into teams of no more than six.
  - 2.1. Give teams 5 to 10 minutes to come up with their own additions to the basic Charleston.
  - 2.2. Play "Let's Misbehave" several times so that students can practice with the music.
  - 2.3. Have teams perform for the class.
  - 2.4. Use *Charleston: Performance Rubric* if desired.

### **Measurement**

*Charleston: Performance Rubric*

### **Resources**

The Library of Congress

<http://www.loc.gov/index.html>

The Great Depression

<http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/depression/about.htm>

British Pathé

<http://www.britishpathe.com>

For a Web Quest on *The Great Depression*, visit

<http://www.todaysteacher.com/TheGreatDepressionWebQuest>

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## **Lesson Two: Episode Three**

(time needed: 45 to 60 minutes)

### **Segment Title**

*A New Step Every Day: 1920s–Early 1930s*

### **Lesson Title**

*When the Lyrics Had Meaning*

### **Lesson Focus**

General music concept focusing on lyric writing.

### **Purpose**

To explore the song lyrics as they reflect the society of the time.

# The American Songbook

## Episode Three

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### Objective

Students will be able to:

Examine lyrics as they reflect upon society and history.

Compose lyrics reflective of current times.

### MENC Standard

Content Standard #6: Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.

Content Standard #7: Evaluate music and music performances.

Content Standard #9: Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

### Cross-Curricular Tags

History – Great Depression

Language Arts – Lyric Writing or Poetry

### Materials

Anything Goes by Cole Porter, as performed by Patti Lupone

(can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVsD0rltRr8&feature=Playlist&p=4635B6AAD0FF4355&playnext=1&index=10>)

Lyric sheet for “Anything Goes”

“Anything Goes” video from youtube

Cole Porter Fact Sheet

Anything Goes Gallery Walk Templates to be reprinted on  
paper no smaller than 11.5” X 17”

Anything Goes in a New Millennium

Anything Goes Karaoke Track (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JuVrzVPQy04>)

Anything Goes Performance Rubric

Original Lyrics for “Anything Goes” (optional)

“Anything Goes” recording by Cole Porter (optional)

OR performed by Al Bowlly

(can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0NAf7SZcOGc>)

Computer with Internet and speakers

LCD projector, SMART board, or appropriate technology to view the computer screen

### Lesson Introduction – Predicting music style based on lyrics

(Time needed: 5 to 10 minutes)

1. Lead students in a discussion by posing the following questions:
  - 1.1. You walk into your favorite store at the mall. The manager meets you at the door and says, “You are the one-millionth customer! For you, anything goes!” What are you going to do?
  - 1.2. You’re planning your birthday party. You’re told, “Since it’s your birthday, anything goes!” What are you going to plan?

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- 1.3. The principle has decided to throw out the rulebook for the day. What do you think will happen?
2. Conclude with a definition for the phrase “Anything Goes.” Write this definition on the board.
3. Ask the students to predict what they think a song with the title *Anything Goes* will be about. Write the responses under the previous definition.
4. (*Note:* depending on the students, they might be familiar with the a number of songs that share the title *Anything Goes*: a country-western song by Randy Houser; two rock songs – one by AC\*DC and one by Guns-n-Roses – and a soul song by Ras Kass.)
5. Tell the students that the song *Anything Goes* that *you* are talking about was written in 1934. Ask them if this changes their prediction of what the song is about.

### Learning Activity

(*Time needed:* 15 to 20 minutes. Add an additional 45 to 55 minutes if doing the extended research option)

1. Present the lyrics to the song “Anything Goes” by Cole Porter as a Gallery Walk. (See attached “Anything Goes” Gallery Walk Template.)
2. Put students in small groups and invite them to travel around the room, making a comment on each lyric sheet. (Each group should have a different colored marker.)
3. After each group has completed a comment on each sheet, review the comments together as a class and clarify any misconceptions about the lyrics or words.
4. Before playing the song, have students make a prediction about the music itself: Will it be fast/slow? Major/minor? Instruments? Write their responses on the board.
5. Play the “Anything Goes” video. Did their predictions of the music match?
6. Ask students why they heard tap-dancing in this song? Does that give any clues to the origin of this song? Guide students to the conclusion that this song is from a musical.
7. Distribute the *Cole Porter Fact Sheet*.

### Optional research project

8. Distribute Original Lyrics for “Anything Goes.”
9. Play “Anything Goes” sung either by Cole Porter or Al Bowlly.
10. Have students compare performances, making note that the lyrics in Porter’s version is different from Lupone’s.
11. Have students work in groups to research the **bolded** words to discover the relevance to the song and the times.

### Reinforcing Activity

(*Time needed:* 25 to 30 minutes, depending on class size and number of groups)

1. Explain to students that they will be composing their own lyrics to “Anything Goes.”
2. Distribute “*Anything Goes*” in a *New Millennium*.

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## **Episode Three**

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3. Have students work in small group to create their own lyrics.
4. Using the “Anything Goes” Accompaniment Track, invite students to perform their lyrics.

### **Measurement**

Teacher Observation: “Anything Goes” Performance Rubric

### **Resources**

Library of Congress

<http://www.loc.gov/>

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## **Lesson Three: Episode Three**

(Time needed: 45 to 60 minutes)

### **Segment Title**

*A New Step Every Day: 1920s–Early 1930s*

### **Lesson Title**

*Those Fascinating Rhythms*

### **Lesson Focus**

Advanced Musical Element: Syncopation

### **Purpose**

To identify and perform complex rhythm patterns in music from the American popular song from the early to mid-20th century.

### **Objective**

Students will be able to:

- Identify areas of syncopation from aural example.
- Perform syncopated rhythms alone and in small group.
- Create a syncopated pattern.

### **MENC Standard**

Content Standard #2: performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.

Content Standard #4: Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.

Content Standard #5: Reading and notating music.

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## Episode Three

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### Materials

Recording of “We Will Rock You” by Brian May as performed by Queen (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-tJYN-eG1zk&feature=avmsc2>)

Recording of “Car Wash” by Norman Whitfield as performed by Rose Royce (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z0zA44zK5YQ>)

Recording of “Fascinating Rhythm” by George and Ira Gershwin – as performed by Cliff Edwards (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FNekUJOILfA>)

“Fascinating Rhythm” Lyrics Handout

“Fascinating Rhythm” Lyrics Handout in metric groupings (optional)

Rhythm Complex for “Fascinating Rhythm” handout

Rhythm Complex Performance Rubric

Classroom percussion instruments

Computer with Internet and speakers

LCD projector, SMART board, or appropriate technology to view the computer screen

### Lesson Introduction – Identify syncopation

(Time needed: 5 to 10 minutes)

1. As students enter, have recording of “We Will Rock You” playing.
2. Invite students to clap along.
3. Have music go right into “Car Wash.”
4. Continue to encourage students to clap.
5. At the end of the songs, have students describe the difference between the two songs, focusing on the rhythms.
6. Introduce the word *Syncopation* as performing a rhythm on the *off* beat.
7. Have students determine which of the two songs was an example of syncopation.

### Learning Activity – Discover how syncopation is created

(time needed: 10 to 20 minutes)

1. Divide class into two groups.
2. Hand out classroom instruments.
3. Explain to the class that there are a variety of ways to perform a syncopated rhythm.
  - 3.1. Have one group (drums, if possible) play a strong 4/4 pattern. Have the other group, (a lighter instruments, such as metalophones or wood blocks) play on two and four. Ask students how this achieves syncopation. (Emphasized the *up-beat*.)
  - 3.2. Start again with the drum group playing a strong 4/4 pattern. Have the other group play on the “and” beat. Ask students how this achieved syncopation. (Emphasized the *off-beat*.)
  - 3.3. Have the lighter instruments perform a strong 3/4 meter, emphasizing the downbeat. *At the same time*, have the other group perform the strong 4/4 pattern, emphasizing the downbeat. Ask students how this achieved syncopation. (Two meters at the same time with different *down-beats*.)
4. Hand out “Fascinating Rhythm” Lyrics.

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5. Play recording of “Fascinating Rhythm.” Have students tap a 4/4 beat as the music is performed, following along with the lyrics.
6. Play recording again. Have students clap loudly on the words that are bolded and underlined (the beginning of each *lyric* metric stress.)
7. Have one group play a strong down-beat on the drums. Have another group play the lighter instruments at the beginning of each lyric phrase.
8. Ask students how this achieves syncopation. (The lyrics are in a different metric stress than the music.)
9. Hand out “Fascinating Rhythm” Lyrics handout in metric groupings and repeat so that students can see the metric syncopation. (optional)

**Reinforcing Activity** – create a syncopated accompaniment to “Fascinating Rhythm” (time needed: 20 to 30 minutes)

1. Put students into small groups
2. Hand out *Rhythm Complex*.
3. Explain to students that the sixteen squares represent eight divided beats in 4/4 time. Ask students why they think beats 1 and 5 are shaded in. (Because they represent the downbeats.)
4. Instruct students that their group is going to create a syncopated rhythm pattern accompany *Fascinating Rhythm* by putting “X”s in squares. They should not fill more than eight squares as music needs silence as much as it needs sound.
5. Give students time to create their pattern.
6. When they have created their pattern, have them practice clapping it while counting “one & two & three & four & ...” out loud.
7. When students can clap the pattern correctly *as a group*, invite them to get classroom instruments.
8. Have each group perform with the song, one group at a time. The other groups should keep a soft four-beat pattern going on their instruments to help establish the syncopation of the performing group.
9. If students are musically adept, have them convert the patterns illustrated by “X”s to rhythmic notation.

### **Measurement**

*Rhythm Complex Performance Rubric*

### **Reference**

*Songfacts*

<http://www.songfacts.com/>

*YouTube*

<http://youtube.com>

**“Anything Goes”**  
**Gallery Walk Template**

- ☺ Circle any words or phrases that are confusing to your group.
- ☺ As a group, write a short sentence in the blank below, putting these lyrics into your own words.

*Times have changed,  
And we've often rewound the clock,  
Since the Puritans got a shock,  
When they landed on Plymouth Rock.  
If today,  
Any shock they should try to stem,  
'Stead of landing on Plymouth Rock,  
Plymouth Rock would land on them.*

Group #1: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Group #2: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Group #3: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Group #4: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Group #5: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**“Anything Goes”**  
**Gallery Walk Template**

- ☺ Circle any words or phrases that are confusing to your group.
- ☺ As a group, write a short sentence in the blank below, putting these lyrics into your own words.

*In olden days a glimpse of stocking  
Was looked on as something shocking,  
But now, God knows,  
Anything Goes.*

Group #1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #3: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #4: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #5: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**“Anything Goes”**  
**Gallery Walk Template**

- ☺ Circle any words or phrases that are confusing to your group.
- ☺ As a group, write a short sentence in the blank below, putting these lyrics into your own words.

*Good authors too who once knew better words,  
Now only use four letter words  
Writing prose,  
Anything Goes.*

Group #1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #3: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #4: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #5: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**“Anything Goes”**  
**Gallery Walk Template**

- ☺ Circle any words or phrases that are confusing to your group.
- ☺ As a group, write a short sentence in the blank below, putting these lyrics into your own words.

*The world has gone mad today  
And good's bad today,  
And black's white today,  
And day's night today,  
When most guys today  
That women prize today  
Are just silly gigolos*

Group #1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #3: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #4: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #5: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**“Anything Goes”**  
**Gallery Walk Template**

- ☺ Circle any words or phrases that are confusing to your group.
- ☺ As a group, write a short sentence in the blank below, putting these lyrics into your own words.

*And though I'm not a great romancer  
I know that I'm bound to answer  
When you propose,  
Anything goes.*

Group #1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #3: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #4: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #5: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**“Anything Goes”**  
**Gallery Walk Template**

- ☺ Circle any words or phrases that are confusing to your group.
- ☺ As a group, write a short sentence in the blank below, putting these lyrics into your own words.

*When grandmama whose age is eighty  
In night clubs is getting matey with gigolo's,  
Anything Goes.*

Group #1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #3: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #4: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #5: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**“Anything Goes”**  
**Gallery Walk Template**

- ☺ Circle any words or phrases that are confusing to your group.
- ☺ As a group, write a short sentence in the blank below, putting these lyrics into your own words.

*When mothers pack and leave poor father  
Because they decide they'd rather be tennis pros,  
Anything Goes.*

Group #1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #3: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #4: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #5: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**“Anything Goes”**  
**Gallery Walk Template**

- ☺ Circle any words or phrases that are confusing to your group.
- ☺ As a group, write a short sentence in the blank below, putting these lyrics into your own words.

*If driving fast cars you like,  
If low bars you like,  
If old hymns you like,  
If bare limbs you like,  
If Mae West you like,  
Or me undressed you like,  
Why, nobody will oppose!*

Group #1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #3: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #4: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #5: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**“Anything Goes”**  
**Gallery Walk Template**

- ☺ Circle any words or phrases that are confusing to your group.
- ☺ As a group, write a short sentence in the blank below, putting these lyrics into your own words.

*When every night, the set that's smart  
Is intruding in nudist parties in studios,  
Anything Goes.*

Group #1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #3: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #4: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #5: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**“Anything Goes”**  
**Gallery Walk Template**

- ☺ Circle any words or phrases that are confusing to your group.
- ☺ As a group, write a short sentence in the blank below, putting these lyrics into your own words.

*If saying your prayers you like,  
If green pears you like,  
If old chairs you like,  
If back stairs you like,  
If love affairs you like,  
With young bears you like,  
Why nobody will oppose!*

Group #1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #3: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #4: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group #5: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# “Anything Goes” in a New Millennium

Music and Lyrics by Cole Porter

AND \_\_\_\_\_

## **THEN**

In olden days a glimpse of stocking  
Was looked on as something shocking,  
But now, God knows,  
Anything Goes.

Good authors too, who once knew better words,  
Now only use four letter words  
Writing prose,  
Anything Goes.

The world has gone mad today  
And good's bad today,  
And black's white today,  
And day's night today,  
When most guys today  
That women prize today  
Are just silly gigolos

And though I'm not a great romancer  
I know that I'm bound to answer  
When you propose,  
Anything Goes.

## **NOW**

In olden days a \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
But now, God knows,  
Anything Goes.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Anything Goes.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Anything Goes.

# “Anything Goes”

from the musical *Anything Goes*

Music and Lyrics by Cole Porter

Times have changed,  
And we've often rewind the clock,  
Since the Puritans got a shock,  
When they landed on Plymouth Rock.

If today,  
Any shock they should try to stem,  
'Stead of landing on Plymouth Rock,  
Plymouth Rock would land on them.

In olden days a glimpse of stocking  
Was looked on as something shocking,  
But now, God knows,  
Anything Goes.

Good authors too, who once knew better words,  
Now only use four letter words  
Writing prose,  
Anything Goes.

The world has gone mad today  
And good's bad today,  
And black's white today,  
And day's night today,  
When most guys today  
That women prize today  
Are just silly gigolos

And though I'm not a great romancer  
I know that I'm bound to answer  
When you propose,  
Anything Goes.

When grandmama whose age is eighty  
In night clubs is getting matey with gigolos,  
Anything Goes.

When mothers pack and leave poor father  
Because they decide they'd rather be  
tennis pros,  
Anything Goes.

If driving fast cars you like,  
If low bars you like,  
If old hymns you like,  
If bare limbs you like,  
If Mae West you like  
Or me undressed you like,  
Why, nobody will oppose!

When every night,  
The set that's smart  
Is intruding in nudist parties in studios,  
Anything Goes.

The world has gone mad today  
And good's bad today,  
And black's white today,  
And day's night today,  
When most guys today  
That women prize today  
Are just silly gigolos

And though I'm not a great romancer  
I know that I'm bound to answer  
When you propose,  
Anything Goes

If saying your prayers you like,  
If green pears you like  
If old chairs you like,  
If back stairs you like,  
If love affairs you like  
With young bears you like,  
Why nobody will oppose!

And though I'm not a great romancer  
I know that I'm bound to answer  
When you propose,  
Anything Goes...  
Anything Goes!

You can view Patti Lupone's performance from the Tony Awards  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVsD0rltRr8>

## “Anything Goes” Performance Grading Rubric

*(Teacher’s Note: As the grading system for the performing arts varies greatly between schools, the following rubric merely establishes the measurable criteria. Additions and subtractions should be made to fit the individual situation.)*

Student \_\_\_\_\_

Measurable Criteria	Points/Grade
The student participated with the group and contributed to the lyrics.	
The student sang with the group, using proper vocal placement, pitch, and rhythms.	
The student’s lyrics showed relevance to modern times.	
The student showed creativity in the lyrics.	
The student was a polite and courteous audience member while other groups performed.	
Comment:	
<b>FINAL GRADE</b>	

# Cole Porter Fact Sheet



Cole Porter was born on June 9th, 1891, in Peru, Indiana. He got his unique name from the *last* name of both of his parents: Kate *Cole* and Sam *Porter*.

Porter's mother, Kate, came from a very wealthy family. In fact, her father was considered one of the wealthiest men in Indiana! Even though Kate married a shy pharmacist, her father made sure that Kate and her family always had enough money for the best of everything.

Many composers of his time wrote only the music while someone else wrote the words. Cole Porter was different because he wrote both the words and music together. He started composing songs when he was ten years old. When he was fourteen, his music teacher taught him that the words of a song (lyrics), the meter (rhythm), and the notes must all work together if the song is going to be successful – and Cole Porter was *very* successful at writing songs.

Porter went to the best schools, traveled around the world, and generally lived the life of the rich and famous. He wrote many songs about the world of the wealthy. His musical *Anything Goes* takes place on a luxury ship and is a mixed-up comedy about fame, fortune, and falling in love.

## JEOPARDY QUESTION!

This composer and lyricist was injured in a horse riding accident when he was forty-six, which left him in constant pain, yet he went on to write one of his most successful shows *Kiss Me Kate*.

The Answer Is:  
Who is *Cole Porter*!

# “Fascinating Rhythm” Lyrics Handout

Music: George Gershwin    Lyrics: Ira Gershwin

Performed by: Cliff Edwards (aka “Ukelele Ike”)

Got a little rhythm, a rhythm, a rhythm  
That pit-a pats through my brain;  
So darn persistent,  
The day isn't distant  
When it'll drive me insane.  
Comes in the morning  
Without any warning,  
And hangs around me all day.  
I'll have to sneak up to it  
Someday, and speak up to it.  
I hope it listens when I say:

**F**ascinating Rhythm,  
You've got me on the go!  
Fascinating Rhythm,  
I'm all a-quiver.

**W**hat a mess you're making!  
The neighbors want to know  
Why I'm **a**lways shaking  
Just like a flivver.

Each morning I get up with the sun --  
Start a-hopping,  
Never stopping --  
To find at night no work has been done.

I know that  
**O**nce it didn't matter --  
But now you're doing wrong;  
When you **s**tart to patter  
I'm so unhappy.

**W**on't you take a day off?  
Decide to run along  
Somewhere **f**ar away off --  
And make it snappy!

Oh, how I long to be the man I used to be!  
Fascinating Rhythm,  
You gotta stop picking on me?

## “Fascinating Rhythm” Lyrics Handout (in metric groupings)

Music: George Gershwin Lyrics: Ira Gershwin

Performed by: Cliff Edwards (aka “Ukelele Ike”)

4 Got a little rhy--thm, a rhy--thm, a rhy--thm | That pit-a- pats through my brain; |  
4 So darn per- sistent, The day isn't distant | When it'll drive me in- sane. |  
Comes in the morning with-- out any warning, | And hangs a- round me all day. |  
I'll have to sneak up to it Someday, and speak up to it. | I hope it listens when I say: |  
Fascinating rhythm. You've got me on the go! Fasci- |nating rhythm, I'm all a- quiver. |  
What a mess you're making! The neighbors want to know Why I'm |always shaking Just like a flivver. |  
Each morning I get up with the |sun , Start a-hopping. Never stopping. |  
To find at night no work has been |done. I know that |  
Once it didn't matter, but now you're doing wrong; When you |start to patter I'm so un- happy. |  
Won't you take a day off? De- cide to run a- long Somewhere |far away off , and make it snappy! |  
Oh, how I long to be the man | I used to be! |  
Fascinating Rhythm, you gotta stop picking on |me! ||

Recording can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FNekUJOILfA>

The Great  
Depression

1929-1941

***Just the Facts***

After World War I, the focus changed from manufacturing for the war effort to producing items for the American consumer.

The wealthy started investing heavily in new industries.

These new industries hired lots of new workers.

The new industries produced items that were still too expensive for the majority of Americans.

These new industries started to lose money.

The American people started to lose faith in the economy.

# **AND THEN, THE STOCK MARKET CRASHED!**

People who had invested in these new companies panicked. They were afraid that they were going to lose all the money they had invested in new industries, so they all started to sell their stock.

On October 24th, 1929, sixteen million shares of stock were sold.

The new industries didn't have the money to pay their stockholders.

People lost all of their savings, the new industries were forced to shut down, and people lost their jobs.

25% (one quarter) of America's population was out of work.

People who were able to keep their jobs saw their wages cut almost in half (43%).

Adding to that, a great drought hit the Midwest.

Farm prices fell so low that many lost their farms, adding to the number of people unemployed.

The people hardest hit by the Great Depression were those with little to lose. Some of the nation's wealthy lost all of their money, too, but many were able to keep their comfortable lifestyle.

So what do you do when the world is crashing down around you?

DANCE

## Rhythm Complex for “Fascinating Rhythm”

You and your group are going to create an eight-beat syncopated pattern to accompany the song “Fascinating Rhythm.”

Here are the steps you should take:

1. Practicing counting “1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & ... “ while clapping the *down-beats* (1, 2, 3, 4 ...)
2. Practicing counting “1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & ... “ while clapping the *up-beats* (all the “&s”)
3. Put “Xs” in no more than eight boxes to create a syncopated rhythm pattern.
4. Clap only the “X” beats while counting “1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & ... “ out loud, and then counting in your heads.
5. When you can clap it correctly as a group, ask for permission to get the classroom instruments.

<b>1</b>	<b>&amp;</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>&amp;</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&amp;</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>&amp;</b>

<b>5</b>	<b>&amp;</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>&amp;</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>&amp;</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>&amp;</b>

## Rhythm Complex Performance Grading Rubric

*(Teacher's Note: As the grading system for the performing arts varies greatly between schools, the following rubric merely establishes the measurable criteria. Additions and subtractions should be made to fit the individual situation.)*

Student \_\_\_\_\_

Measurable Criteria	Points/Grade
The student participated with the group and contributed to the syncopated pattern.	
The student performed the syncopated pattern accurately.	
The student showed the proper technique for playing the classroom instrument.	
The student showed creativity in the pattern.	
The student was a polite and courteous audience member while other groups performed.	
Comment:	
<b>FINAL GRADE</b>	

## The Charleston Performance Grading Rubric

*(Teacher's Note: As the grading system for the performing arts varies greatly between schools, the following rubric merely establishes the measurable criteria. Additions and subtractions should be made to fit the individual situation.)*

Student \_\_\_\_\_

Measurable Criteria	Points/Grade
The student participated with the group and contributed to the embellished dance steps.	
The student performed the basic dance step accurately and on-beat.	
The student showed creativity in the embellishments of the basic dance step.	
The student was a polite and courteous audience member while other groups performed.	
Comment:	
<b>FINAL GRADE</b>	

# The Charleston Step-By-Step

*The Charleston* was first introduced in the mid-1920s and quickly became the dance of choice for “red hot jazz” and Dixieland. Since going out to hear music was the most popular form of entertainment of the times, the Charleston’s simple dance steps became the roots for some very interesting variations.

## The Basic Step

The basic step involves four steps (step/kick/step/kick) – one for each beat in a 4/4 measure.

Start with your feet together

- Beat 1     *Step back* with your *right* foot.
  - Beat 2     *Kick back* with your *left* foot
  - Beat 3     *Step forward* with you *left* foot to its original position
  - Beat 4     *Kick forward* with your *right* foot.
- Repeat*

## Adding the Arms

Hold your arms in front of you, elbows bent, hands facing out.

- Beat 1     *Swing your arms to the left*
  - Beat 2     *Swing your arms to the right*
  - Beat 3     *Swing your arms to the left*
  - Beat 4     *Swing your arms to the right*
- Repeat*

Now put your arms and feet together, and you’re dancing the Charleston!

