

**Objective**

- Introduction to the life of Count Basie through student reading and listening example

**Materials**

- **PowerPoint:** Lesson 7 - *Count Basie* page 21
- **JAZZ CLUB Listening Example:** *Jumpin' at the Woodside* page 22
- **Student Worksheet:** Lesson 7 - *Lesson and Listening Assessments* page 23

**I. PowerPoint Count Basie**

1. Show the students PowerPoint Lesson 7 and have students take turns reading the slides.
2. Have students complete the Lesson ASSESSMENT individually or as a class.

**William James Basie** was born in New Jersey in 1904. As a child, he studied piano with his mother. Basie moved to New York City as a teenager and learned to play Dixieland jazz. Still in his teens, Basie made money traveling the country playing piano for different entertainers. These traveling **vaudeville** shows were very popular from the 1880s to the 1930s. While touring with a show, Basie was stranded in Kansas City. He got a job playing piano and organ in a movie theater. The first movies, called **silent films**, did not have sound, so musicians were hired to play music that would go along with the action on the movie screen.

Kansas City was a center for exciting blues based jazz. The blues and **swing** music Basie heard and played became the foundation of his future big band music. Basie got his nickname "The Count" in the early 1920s from a DJ on Basie's first radio broadcast. The nickname stuck and the Count Basie Orchestra, formed in 1935, became one of the most popular **swing** era big bands of the 1930s and 1940s.

People loved to dance to the hard driving beat of the rhythm section mixed with the relaxed feeling rhythm of the horns. This combination led to their unofficial title as the "**swingiest**" band ever. **Swing** was the name given to jazz rhythm as well as the name of the style of jazz in the 1930s and 1940s. Listen to the Count Basie Orchestra performing one of their "**swingiest**" songs, "Jumpin' at the Woodside."

**ANSWER KEY Student Reading Lesson ASSESSMENT**

1. What was William Basie's nickname? (*Count*)
2. Identify the instrument Count Basie played. (*Piano*)
3. Name the style of jazz Count Basie's band played. (*Swing [Big Band]*)
4. What other style of music influenced Count Basie's swing jazz?  
A. Rock B. Blues C. Classical (*B. Blues*)
5. Basie's big band had the unofficial title \_\_\_\_\_ band ever.  
A. laziest B. smartest C. swingiest (*C. swingiest*)
6. Describe the rhythm of the Count Basie Orchestra. (*"Hard driving rhythm section and relaxed feeling rhythm of the horns"*)

## II. JAZZ CLUB Listening Example

**Title: "Jumpin' at the Woodside"**

*Composer:* Count Basie

*Performer:* Count Basie and His Orchestra

available on: *The Complete Decca Recordings* (GRP GRD-3-611)

**YouTube** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehc5J0Yms9Q](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehc5J0Yms9Q) [3:06 Process/Assessment below]

**iTunes** Ken Burns "Jazz" CD 2 track 10 [3:06 Process/Assessment below]

**Suggested YouTube Search** Jumpin at the Woodside (1938 version), Count Basie [1<sup>st</sup> video - other choices: 2, 3]

### SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCESS JAZZ CLUB Listening Example

1. Explain that the piece is swing/big band jazz and discuss the instrumentation.

*Brass section:* 3 trumpets and 3 trombones

*Woodwind section:* 4 saxophones and clarinet

*Rhythm section:* piano - *Count Basie*, bass, guitar and drum set

2. Review tempo and meter (conduct examples - include presto).
  3. Instruct students to listen for the instruments, tempo, meter, mood, style and which instruments improvise a jazz solo.
  4. Explain that the melody is based on a very simple repeating pattern called a riff.
  5. Play recording while conducting a presto tempo with a 4/4 meter. *Video locations:*
- 0:00 Introduction, 0:08 A section, 0:24 B section, 0:32 A section with piano solo, 0:55 B piano solo, 1:03 A section, 1:04 trumpet solo-mute, 1:41 Sax solo, 2:14 clarinet solo
6. Have students complete the Listening ASSESSMENT individually or as a class.

### ANSWER KEY JAZZ CLUB Listening ASSESSMENT

1. Identify the instruments you hear. (8) (*Trumpets, trombones, saxophones, clarinet, piano - Count Basie, guitar, bass and drum set*)
2. Determine the tempo and the meter. (*fast [presto], 4/4*)
3. The melody is based on a simple repeating phrase called a \_\_\_\_\_. (*Riff*)
4. Which instruments improvised a jazz solo? (4) (*Piano, trumpet, saxophone and clarinet*)
5. Describe the mood of the song. (*Happy, fun, exciting, etc.*)
6. Name the style of this piece. (*Swing - Big band*)

### Related Activity Blues Cats Recorder Songbook

#### **WINKA'S BLUES** Pages 23-24

- Recorder/vocal song G A B<sup>b</sup>
- Swing era - Big band style
- *Performance and Accompaniment* CD tracks

