



International Jazz Day

Handbook for Educators

Revised 28 January 2022

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I. What Is International Jazz Day?

International Jazz Day is the world's largest annual celebration of jazz as a force for peace, intercultural dialogue and international cooperation. Commemorated every year on April 30, International Jazz Day (or "Jazz Day") brings people together through independently-organized performances, education programs, radio and television broadcasts and community outreach initiatives in more than 190 countries to communicate and share the positive values and legacy of this special music.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) officially designated April 30 as International Jazz Day in 2011 in order to highlight jazz and its diplomatic role of uniting people in all corners of the globe. International Jazz Day is chaired and led by UNESCO Director General **Audrey Azoulay** and legendary jazz pianist and composer **Herbie Hancock**, who serves as a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Intercultural Dialogue and Chairman of the Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz. The Institute is the nonprofit charged with planning, promoting and producing this annual celebration.

International Jazz Day brings together communities, schools, artists, historians, academics, and jazz enthusiasts all over the world **to celebrate and learn about jazz** and its roots, future and impact; **raise awareness of the need for intercultural dialogue** and mutual understanding; and **reinforce international cooperation** and communication. Each year on April 30, this international art form is recognized for promoting peace, dialogue among cultures, diversity, and respect for human rights and human dignity; eradicating discrimination; promoting freedom of expression; fostering gender equality; and reinforcing the role of youth in enacting social change.

International Jazz Day is the culmination of Jazz Appreciation Month, which draws public attention to jazz and its extraordinary heritage throughout April. As part of the official Jazz Day program, a Global Host City is selected annually to host master classes, public performances and community service events leading up to the spectacular All-Star Global Concert on April 30, which is streamed live for free worldwide. The Host Celebration complements the parallel array of independent observances taking place on all seven continents.

Education is central to the Jazz Day mission. That is why schools, educators and students make up an indispensable component of International Jazz Day celebrations every year. **The following pages contain information for educators and/or school administrators who are seeking to become**

involved in International Jazz Day. Please feel free to circulate this document widely.

II. Getting Involved

International Jazz Day gives people of every nationality, language and background the opportunity to be part of a global community focused around jazz and its positive values. There are no membership fees, no application and no prerequisites for joining the International Jazz Day family. The only requirement is that organizers be passionate about celebrating jazz and its positive values, and that they bring that enthusiasm to their community through independently organized events of any size.

Jazz Day is often referred to as a festival, but it is so much more than that. Each year, we witness an astonishing array of programming—large and small, all undertaken voluntarily—curated by our network of organizers and partners. Events range from concerts and jam sessions to educational workshops and master classes to art exhibitions, poetry readings, radio broadcasts, Zoom panels, charity fundraisers and visits to hospitals, elder care facilities and homeless shelters. There are even some ambitious, multi-day events that incorporate all of these elements!

Schools and other educational institutions are at the heart of International Jazz Day. Since its inception, jazz has been a voice for freedom, tolerance, equality, peaceful collaboration and creativity. It has been a music of protest and celebration alike. Born in the United States out of the oppression and resilience of African Americans, jazz has now been adopted and adapted by people in every corner of the world. Teaching students about this special history and legacy is a critical part of building a sustainable future for jazz.

Teachers and students across disciplines can benefit from Jazz Day in a variety of ways:

- Integrate International Jazz Day into your existing curricula/lesson plans
- Develop your own Jazz Day activity utilizing the free resources and sample lesson plans available on jazzday.com
- Plug into the free education and engagement activities offered around each year's Global Host Celebration

This handbook provides an overview of simple, practical strategies for leveraging International Jazz Day to support your classroom objectives on or around April 30. Sample lesson plans are included, as is an outline of available resources on

jazzday.com along with suggestions for how to use them. We encourage you to be creative and use these materials as a jumping off point for even more adventurous learning experiences!

III. Integrating International Jazz Day in the Classroom

A. Easy ways to make April 30 a “Jazz Day”

There is no “wrong” way to celebrate International Jazz Day, especially in the classroom. With time an ever-more precious commodity, teachers are encouraged to mark the occasion in the way that best suits their resources and environment. Easy examples can include:

- Play a jazz recording as students enter/exit the classroom
- Make an announcement to the class
- Print out pictures of famous jazz musicians like Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald and Thelonious Monk and display them in the classroom
- Watch a clip from a previous International Jazz Day All-Star Concert or Education & Outreach Program and have students discuss their reactions—there are lots of options available on the [official International Jazz Day YouTube channel](#).
- Pass out a printout of our short [list of jazz-related book suggestions](#), allowing students to read a book about jazz or a particular jazz artist and present a brief report for extra credit.

B. Involving the music department

International Jazz Day is a natural fit for music departments at all levels, including those who may not have a dedicated jazz band. There are numerous creative ways for band and orchestra directors, general music teachers, music theory instructors, music history & appreciation teachers and music students to get involved on or around April 30.

Ideas for band and orchestra directors:

- Dedicate class time on April 30 to learning a new piece with jazz or jazz-influenced elements. The [IMSLP/Petrucci Music Library](#) has many quality public domain scores available for download.
- Assign students to learn the melody of a different jazz standard, then take turns performing it for the class
- Allow students to transcribe a portion of a famous jazz solo and perform it for the class for extra credit

Ideas for teachers of music history/theory and non-performance disciplines:

- Assign students to research and make a brief presentation on the life of a famous jazz musician/composer
- Have students listen to and compare recordings from jazz and hip-hop and discuss the differences and similarities between the two genres (some helpful suggestions [may be found here](#))
- For music theory teachers, dedicate the April 30 class period to discussing a key theoretical element of jazz, such as:
 - II V I's in major
 - II V I's in minor
 - The 12-Bar Blues
 - Turnarounds
 - Chord qualities and related scales
 - Contrafacts
- Take students through the early origins, history, and seminal musicians of a particular style of jazz, like swing or BeBop, using the free resources available at websites like jazzinamerica.org or [Let Freedom Swing](#)

C. Utilizing resources from jazzday.com

Jazzday.com includes a substantial [catalogue of free educational resources](#) collected from various sources around the globe. These resources include activities, lesson plans and packs, games, videos, arts and crafts projects and more spanning different languages, disciplines and experience levels. There are even entries for math and science teachers [via mathsciencemusic.org](http://mathsciencemusic.org). Teachers are encouraged to explore these resources and adapt them for their own classroom use. Here are a few of our favorites:

- [Official International Jazz Day Spotify Playlist](#)
- Jazz Education Network: ["Writing Blues Lyrics"](#)
- JB Dyas, PhD: ["What is Jazz - an Introduction"](#)
- *Math, Science & Music*: [Groove Pizza App](#)
- Guitar Junky: ["History of Jazz Music: A Detailed Timeline"](#)
- Jazz at Lincoln Center's Jazz Academy: ["What Is Improvisation?"](#)

Have you been using the educational resources on jazzday.com? Do you have a suggestion for an addition to our library? Please [get in touch with our Outreach & Education Team](#) to share your story or suggestion.

IV. Sample Lesson Plans

A. Intro to Jazz

[Click here for the lesson plan](#)

[Click here for the lecture notes](#)

[Click here for the slide deck](#)

B. Math, Science & Music

[Click here for the lesson plan](#)

[Click here to access "Watermelon Man" on Scratch](#)

C. Arts & Crafts Activity

[Click here for the lesson plan](#)

[Click here to download printable vocabulary sheets](#)

D. Jazz Poetry

[Click here for the lesson plan](#)

[Click here to download printable vocabulary sheets](#)

E. Jazz History

[Click here for the lesson plan on "Early Jazz"](#)

[Click here for the lecture notes](#)

[Click here to download the student handout](#)

F. Band Class/General Music Activity

[Click here for the lesson plan](#)

[Click here for the *How Jazz Works* video demo](#)

[Click here for the *Tenor Madness* video demo](#)

[Click here to download printable vocabulary sheets](#)

V. Suggested Bibliography

Below is a collection of select titles on a variety of jazz-related subjects, as compiled by the International Jazz Day Outreach & Education Team. The titles are categorized by recommended age level. Instructors are encouraged to spend a little time researching each title before assigning or recommending it to their students, as some titles may not be appropriate for all readers.

High School-University

- Amiri Baraka, *Blues People*
- Nate Chinen, *Playing Changes: Jazz for a New Century*
- Julie Coryell, *Jazz-Rock Fusion: The People, The Music*
- Stanley Crouch, *Kansas City Lightning: The Rise and Times of Charlie Parker*

- Linda Dahl, *Morning Glory: A Biography of Mary Lou Williams*
- Miles Davis, *Miles*
- Gary Giddins, *Celebrating Bird*
- Ted Gioia, *How to Listen to Jazz*
- Ted Gioia, *The History of Jazz*
- Herbie Hancock, *Possibilities*
- Robin Kelley, *Thelonious Monk: The Life and Times of an American Original*
- Albert Murray, *Stomping the Blues*
- Kenny Werner, *Effortless Mastery*
- Valerie Wilmer, *As Serious As Your Life: The Story of the New Jazz*
- Wynton Marsalis, *To a Young Jazz Musician: Letters from the Road*
- Ashley Kahn, *A Love Supreme*

Middle School-High School

- Bob Blumenthal, *Jazz: An Introduction to the History and Legends Behind America's Music*
- Christopher Paul Curtis, *Bud, Not Buddy*
- Gary Golio, *Strange Fruit: Billie Holiday and the Power of a Protest Song*
- Marc Myers, *Why Jazz Happened*
- Toni Morrison, *Jazz*

Elementary School-Middle School

- Troy "Trombone Shorty" Andrews, *Trombone Shorty*
- Lesa Cline-Ransome, *Just a Lucky So and So: The Story of Louis Armstrong*
- Andrea Davis Pinkney, *Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and His Orchestra*
- Helen Hancocks, *Ella Queen of Jazz*
- Jonny Hannah, *Hot Jazz Special*
- Howie Mandel, *The Billboard Illustrated History of Jazz and Blues*
- Wynton Marsalis, *Jazz ABZ: An A to Z Collection of Jazz Portraits*
- Roxanne Orgill, *Skit-Scat Raggedy Cat*
- Brian Pinkey, *Max Found Two Sticks*
- Katheryn Russell-Brown, *Little Melba and Her Big Trombone*
- Isabel Sanchez Vegara, *Ella Fitzgerald*
- Gia Volterra de Saulnier, *Journey to Jazzland*
- Jonah Winter, *How Jelly Roll Morton Invented Jazz*
- Barry Wittenstein, *Sonny's Bridge*
- Yona Zeldis McDonough, *Who Was Louis Armstrong?*

Younger Readers

- Carole Boston Weatherford, *Before John Was a Jazz Giant: A Song of John Coltrane*
- Alice Briere-Haquet, *Nina: Jazz Legend and Civil-Rights Activist Nina Simone*
- Karen Ehrhardt, *This Jazz Man*

- Gary Golio, *Bird & Diz*
- Wynton Marsalis, *Squeak, Rumble, Whomp! Whomp! Whomp!*
- Chris Raschka, *Charlie Parker Played Be Bop*
- George David Weiss, Bob Thiele, *What a Wonderful World*
- Lisa Wheeler, *Jazz Baby*
- Jonah Winter, *Dizzy*