



Blues in the Schools F A Q

"TRY, TRUST and
TRIUMPH"

By Fruteland Jackson

www.Fruteland.com

BITS FAQ

Keeping the Blues Alive- A Closer Look

What are Blues in the Schools programs?

Blues in the Schools Programs are music education programs designed to create a deeper appreciation and greater awareness of blues music.

How are Blues in the Schools programs presented or conducted?

Blues-in-the-Schools programs are presented through lecture/ performances or artist residencies.

What is a BITS lecture /performance?

A **lecture /performance** presentation combines blues music with oral history to introduce and acquaint students with blues music. This format is designed to reach the most significant number of students in a classroom, auditorium, or library setting. This workshop introduces early forms of singing blues music with examples of early playing and singing styles that include field hollers and work songs and playing styles from the Mississippi Delta, Piedmont, and East Texas Coast region. This workshop lasts between a classroom period and one hour. Basic definitions of blues music and the biographical information on the significant players throughout blues history are shared. Lecture/performances can be tailored for a classroom activity or in conjunction with school curricula such as history, social studies, and music. Pre-visit information is available to teaching staff. At www.Fruteland.com

What is a Blues in the Schools artist residency?

An **artist residency** is an interactive, hands-on approach to exposing students to blues music that includes music instruction, oral history lessons, and maintaining a journal or notebook. Artist residencies may last from one week to a month and end with showcasing the students at school auditoriums or other public places. The student notebooks contain information on their instruments (maintenance and accessories), and other relevant information. Students are encouraged to complete a book report. Students learn to play a 12 Bar Blues on acoustic guitar, harmonica, or through song. Songwriting writing workshops are the third option for student involvement. The sponsor is provided a syllabus with goals and a timetable. Local artists may be enlisted to assist with the final student showcasing. There are lodging, travel, performance, and scheduling requirements.

Blues in the Schools artist in residency program allow students to learn about and better understand and unexposed part of American culture. In communities with little racial diversity, extensive interaction with an artist of color will provide an opportunity to break down racial barriers and biases. By working collaboratively to perform new musical skills, students have the opportunity to develop self-esteem, creative thinking, and self-expression.

Some of the struggles heard in Blues music arise from economic hardship and the struggle for a better life. Learning about blues music allows students to learn about those struggles and relate them to similar struggles within their heritage. A **BITS** artist residency is a genuinely unique experience that allows students to participate in an integrated, hands-on learning experience that explores blues music, language, and oral history on a deeper level and will have a lasting impact on their lives

What grade levels are Blues in the Schools programs best suited?

BITS programs are well-suited to grade levels of elementary, middle, and high school students. Also, gifted, special education, alternative, high risk, and emotionally challenged students. These lecture/performances are popular during Black History Month (February)

What are the benefits of Blues in the Schools programs?

We believe that the opportunity to work with professional artists will enhance the students' ability to express themselves and learn new skills. We endeavor to enhance aesthetic perception, creative expression, or a sense of musical heritage. Other benefits can follow:

1. Provides education and entertainment
2. Enhances students creativity
3. Increases thinking and problem-solving ability
4. Enhances literacy both academically and socially
5. Helps develop the aesthetic judgment
6. Develops self-esteem (removes self-doubt)
7. Brings about cross-cultural understanding
8. Improves school attendance
9. Provides career opportunities
10. Valuable teaching tool for students with special needs
11. Instills a sense of pride, music potential and self-accomplishment
12. Breaks down social barriers (teaches tolerance)
13. Works well with children from all walks of life.
14. Promulgated with State Teaching Standards.