PARAGUAY: SOUNDS OF HOPE

**FEATURED LESSON PLAN: MUSIC AS AN INSTRUMENT OF SOCIAL CHANGE**

**Overview:**

In this lesson, students will examine how a music education program is being used in Paraguay to bring about positive social change. They will then predict how Paraguay’s economy, politics and culture might be different in 20 years as a result of the program. For more background information on Paraguay and the vision for this music program, please see the [Related Resources](https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/teach/paraguayflw/related.html).

**Subject Area:**

Social Studies, Geography, World History, Global Studies, Music

**Grade Level:**

Grades 9-12

**Objectives:**

The student will:

* Examine a program for poor children in Paraguay that aims to bring about positive social change through music
* Discuss benefits that come from studying and performing music
* Infer what economic, political and cultural changes might occur in Paraguay over time as a result of the program

**Estimated Time Needed:**

One 50-minute class period

**Materials Needed:**

* Internet access and equipment to show the class an online video clip and to conduct research
* The FRONTLINE/World film *Paraguay: Sounds of Hope* (length: 14:03)
* Map showing the location of Paraguay

**Procedure:**

1. Ask the class if anyone plays a musical instrument. Invite those who do to describe any benefits they have received from studying music. Capture these benefits on a list that everyone can see. Have students consider whether any of those benefits might help them to be better citizens of your community.
2. Explain that you are going to show the class a video that tells the story of a famous Paraguayan musician who is trying to bring positive change to his country by providing free instruments and musical instruction to poor and neglected children. Point out the location of Paraguay on a map. Explain that years of political uncertainty, corruption and a poor infrastructure have meant that about 60 percent of Paraguayans live in poverty.
3. Show the class *Paraguay: Sounds of Hope* (length: 14:03). Focus student viewing by having them take notes on the ways the Sounds of the Earth program has changed the lives of its participants. After watching the video, have students refer to their notes to make any additions to the class list about the benefits of music.
4. Make further additions to this list by highlighting some sections of FRONTLINE/World’s [interview with Szarán](http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/paraguay604/interview_szaran.html). Specifically, have students consider his answers to these questions:
	* What kinds of music do children play in the program?
	* What has been the most difficult part of running the program?
	* How have years under a dictatorship defined the country?
	* Tell me more about your efforts to expand Sonidos into urban areas. What has it been like to work there? What are some of the challenges?
	* Five years on, how far and wide has your program spread?
	* Why did you take some of the kids from the program to Europe?
	* And for those who are not geniuses, what happens to them? What do they learn?
5. Ask students to take what they’ve learned about Paraguay and the class list about the benefits of music and write a one-page description that predicts how Paraguay might be different in 20 years as a result of the Sounds of the Earth project. Students should frame their predictions by how they think changes might take place in the areas of economics, politics and culture.
6. If time permits, invite students to share what they’ve written with the class. As they read, play audio clips from [“The Music of the Missions”](http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/paraguay604/music.html) in the background.

CREDITS

This teacher's guide was written by Cari Ladd.