

Canadian Music Playlist Challenge

Presented by CBC Music & MusiCounts Learn

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

DEVELOPED BY

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge that this resource will inspire learning communities situated on traditional territories of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples who have inhabited and cared for these vast lands for thousands of years.

This work was developed in a collaboration between MusiCounts staff and a team of teachers from across Canada.

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INTRODUCTION

Many teachers are creating new ways to bring meaningful learning experiences to their students as they navigate teaching during a pandemic. The 2020 Canadian Music Playlist Challenge is a complement to that innovation, designed to engage students while they learn together at home and/or in the classroom.

In previous years, the Music Class Challenge developed student competencies in preparing and performing as students learned about Canadian music. This edition of the challenge will instead focus on competency development in music-related reasoning and communication. Through the creation of student-curated playlists, classes will explore Canadian music, Canadian musicians, and what it means to share musical tastes.

The Playlist Challenge will lead students to explore themes of Canadian and Indigenous identity while building awareness of Canada's musical heritage through the JUNO Awards. With the beautiful mosaic of cultural and musical diversity in Canada, we know students are in for an exciting learning journey.

Given uncertainties surrounding the coming school year, the 2020 Canadian Music Playlist Challenge is designed to engage students while learning together at home and/or in the classroom. This new program will ensure schools across Canada—regardless of their current music program capacity—have the opportunity to participate in this national celebration of Canadian music.

RESOURCE OVERVIEW

While many music educators across Canada have participated in the Canadian Music Class Challenge over the past few years, the Playlist Challenge offers space for all teachers - of music and beyond! - to participate. The purpose of this resource package is to provide all teachers with information and instructional strategies to support interdisciplinary participation in the 2020 Canadian Music Playlist Challenge.

Continuing from previous years, the goals for the Canadian Music Playlist Challenge are:

1. To learn Canadian music in the classroom.
2. To draw attention to the exceptional work music teachers are doing with students across the country.
3. To reinforce the importance of music in a well-rounded education.

Introducing students to the challenge

A slide presentation is available in PowerPoint, Google Slides and PDF formats [here](#) to help teachers introduce the Playlist Challenge and prompt some thinking and discussion on how a class can start their development journey.

SO WHAT IS THE PLAYLIST CHALLENGE?

Classes across Canada are being challenged to create the ultimate playlist of Canadian music. This collection of 15 songs, all of which must be Canadian, will come together to represent an identified theme, the culture/identity of the students, or simply showcase the students' favourite songs.

There are a few rules to help students develop their playlist. One key concept to consider is what makes an artist or song Canadian. Read more about what defines Canadian music [here](#).

1. The playlist should be 15 songs, all of which must be defined as a Canadian recording, as defined by the [MAPL system](#).
2. At least 5 of the songs must be by a JUNO Award [winning or nominated artist](#).
3. With the teacher facilitating the creative process, playlist development should be student-driven, speaking to the interests of the students.
4. Playlist content represents a particular theme (social justice, environmental activism, class favourites, songs that make you feel like dancing, etc).
5. The playlist must be accompanied by a descriptive paragraph, image and video (3-minute maximum) introducing the listener to the theme, the songs, and the class of students.

Submitted playlists and descriptive material will be available for viewing on the CBC Music website along with the school name and location. For more information about the program rules and submission, please visit musiccounts.ca/playlistchallenge.

Teachers are encouraged to consider interdisciplinary connections between music and other art forms, the humanities, math/science, and design thinking. This learning experience can easily combine learning in multiple curricular areas to help students see natural points of intersection in their lives.

PLANNING FOR THE PLAYLIST CHALLENGE

Choosing songs for a playlist can be difficult and if one song doesn't make the list this time, it could always find a home on additional playlists designed to give all your students' favourite music a spot. There are many ways to develop a playlist and the ideas below are available to inspire teachers to find the process that fits your students' context.

If you're looking to engage some social-emotional learning with this project, students could start by thinking about the purpose of the playlist and what they hope a listener will experience when they hit play. Just like this idea, below you'll see a step-by-step process to consider as you plan to engage students, introduce them to the Playlist Challenge, and begin the journey. Each step is flexible and can be extended or condensed to suit the learning needs of students.

STEP 01 GET STARTED

Developing a playlist could be a new experience for students and might be introducing them to ideas about Canadian songs, musicians, or musical identity. This step focuses on establishing some context for students, helping them understand the expectations of the Playlist Challenge.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

These questions can help focus the process or get a conversation started amongst students and their families to establish context.

- + What makes a song Canadian?
- + Who's involved in making Canadian music?
- + Which songs or artists are distinctly Canadian?
- + What music is symbolic of our community, province/territory, or region in Canada?

HELPFUL RESOURCES

Depending on the age of your students and how much learning time is dedicated to this phase of the challenge, here are some quick research and information sources to help students answer the questions above.

This combination of resources to read or listen to is a fraction of what is available online. Use these to help establish context and show students how we define what is Canadian.

- » [The MAPL System - Defining a Canadian Song \(CRTC\)](#)
- » [25 best Canadian Songwriters ever \(CBC\)](#)
- » [What song reminds you of Canada? \(CBC\)](#)
- » [Reclaimed - CBC Music's Indigenous Music Playlist](#)
- » [Canadian Music Hall of Fame](#)
- » [The Role of a Music Publisher \(YouTube\)](#)
- » [Women in the Studio \(YouTube\)](#)

ACTIVITY IDEAS

As students explore Canadian music, here are two learning activities that could help with the playlist development experience.

ACTIVITY 1 DEFINE & DESCRIBE

Use the information gathered from reputable websites and organizations to write a simple definition for Canadian music. This could take the form of a sentence or statement, or could be a list of descriptive words to help guide students in looking for music to include in the playlist.

ACTIVITY 2 SELECT A THEME

With the information students have gathered, brainstorm ideas for your playlist theme. These ideas could build on the list descriptive words, your definition, or topics and concepts of interest to students.

BEHIND THE MUSIC

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

To extend the learning about the Canadian music industry, students can consider and explore the many careers involved in bringing their favorite songs to life. What they will discover is a network of people and careers who contribute to an 'ecosystem' that takes a song from the mind of a songwriter to its radio debut or album launch (songwriters, lyricists, producers, etc). Students may be surprised to learn that sometimes the artist listed on a playlist is the song performer, not the songwriter or composer!

DEVELOPING A THEME

As you select a theme, it is suggested that it weaves into some aspect of the curriculum used in your school. Themes could be developed by students or the teacher, tied to other curricular areas, or celebrate any one or combination of:

- + Social or environmental justice issues
- + Musicians from your province, territory, or region of Canada
- + Indigenous worldview or perspective (inclusive of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples)
- + New or underrepresented voices in music
- + Cultural event, season, holiday, or special special occasion
- + Forms of diversity
- + Diverse languages (inclusive of Indigenous languages)
- + Canadian storytellers
- + JUNO Award winners
- + Any topic of interest to students and your school community

STEP

02

BUILD & REFINE

When vinyl records, cassette tapes, and compact discs were the primary media for listening to music, compilation albums and 'mixtapes' were a common way to enjoy a diversity of music in a single collection. Before committing to recording a mixtape, you had to be very sure about the song order and making sure all the songs would fit on the tape.

Democracy in action?

As part of the design process, students could be forming and presenting arguments for the various songs on your 'long list'.

Students then share their ideas through this combination of critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication skills.

Streaming services, where many people share their playlists, allow for songs to be played in a specific order or played using 'shuffle' so the listener won't know what song will play next. As students continue to build and refine their playlist, they could consider starting with a 'long list', refining the choices down into a 'short list', and then making the final cut.

Through each step of the development process, it will be important to keep students reminded of the theme and goals for the playlist.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

These links will take you to some sample playlists from CBC Music and to resources to help students look for Canadian music to consider for your class playlist.

- » [All Canadian - CBC Music's Collection of Canadian Music Playlists](#)
- » [JUNO 365 - CBC Music's Collection of Playlists featuring JUNO-nominated music](#)
- » [JUNO Award nominees and winners for Indigenous Album, Artist, Group categories](#)
- » [JUNO Awards - Songwriter of the Year nominees & winners](#)
- » [C'est Formidable - CBC Music's playlist of songs from Franco-Canadian communities](#)
- » [Canadian Composers - CBC Music's Canadian composer playlist](#)

ACTIVITY IDEAS

Curriculum across the country is designed to nurture “The 4 Cs”—creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication skills. These activities will draw on all four skill areas no matter how old your students are.

ACTIVITY 3 HIT CIRCLES

Similar to learning activities in language arts, students gather in groups to share and discuss Canadian musicians and their hit songs. The outcome of this exchange could task students with considering songs by a specific artist and nominating one or more to the class playlist.

ACTIVITY 4 HEAR ME OUT

This activity is a chance for students to bring their personal perspective to developing the class playlist. Students select a song they think would be a strong candidate, present it as an option to the class, and attempt to persuade other students to embrace the suggestion.

CHECK...CHECK, 1, 2? EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Outside of class, encourage students to talk about their experience and the playlist content with their friends from other classes or with family. Seeking feedback and ideas is an important part of refinement.

The design process encourages us to test and reconsider decisions. To build confidence in your playlist choices, it can be beneficial to double-check those decisions and test alternative song choices.

As a class, you can continue refining your playlist through a shortlisting process or ‘process of elimination’. There are many ways to consider what songs will make the cut and appear on your class playlist.

With these activities, and others you may develop for your students, there is a good opportunity to use the design process. To read more about the Stanford d.school’s Design Thinking approach, click [here](#).

Keeping the end in mind

Journaling the process during Step 2 could help organize students’ thoughts and ideas. This writing can be valuable as everyone prepares the written, video, or illustrated introduction to your playlist.

STEP 03

PREPARE TO SHARE

There are **three** important parts of sharing your class playlist. Each is a key piece of presenting the creative and thoughtful work of students on the Canadian Music Playlist Challenge website. When your class playlist is ready to be shared, it can be uploaded to the CBC Music website starting on Nov. 9, 2020. Using the **Playlist Template** can be helpful to check that everything is complete and ready to be shared.

1) THE PLAYLIST

Have you got a complete list that matches the playlist criteria?

- + 15 songs, all of which must be a Canadian recording as defined by the **MAPL system**
- + At least 5 of the songs must be by a JUNO Award **winning or nominated artist**
- + Songs all connect to your selected theme
- + The song titles and artists have been checked for spelling and accuracy

2) THE INTRODUCTION

Even the best playlists can't stand on their own. A title and theme will help get the message across, but a scripted video, written description, and graphic image can help draw the listener in further. Here is what you'll need to prepare if you wish to submit your class' playlist to the Playlist Challenge

Make a **video** to introduce your playlist! This can be a collaborative part of the process exploring the theme, process, and learning experience. This could be an opportunity to engage students with special technical skills.

Videos must be a maximum of 3 minutes in length and should be uploaded with a minimum quality of 1080p.

Write a **captivating description** of your class playlist, your theme, and the learning journey you've all shared. Students can practice their writing skills while synthesizing many perspectives from their peers.

Text is limited to 150 carefully proofread words. Changes can't be made once they've been uploaded.

A hand-drawn, digitally designed, or camera snapshot will provide a **visual reference** for your playlist - like an album cover. This is a natural opportunity to engage students with aptitude and interest in the visual arts. Alternatively, this could be a photo of your class or your school.

Graphics/Illustrations should be provided in a square, high-resolution format of at least 300dpi.

3) THE REFLECTION

Given all that students have learned and experienced, it is important to spend some time reflecting, individually or as a class, on the process. Posing some guiding questions will help students be mindful of skill growth, expanded knowledge, and new curiosities. Teachers and students can benefit from taking time to consider any connections or skill transfer to other curricular areas or applications.

Any reflective writing or discussion is just for you and isn't a requirement for the challenge. You may, however, wish to include these ideas in how your class playlist is shared within your own school community. These thoughtful ideas from students might help extend the learning to keep up the momentum and interest in Canadian music.

TIME FOR AN ENCORE To keep the learning going, students can share their playlists between classes within a school or with other participating classes from all across Canada. Classes can share ideas and find other participating classes using the social media hashtag #CanadianPlaylistChallenge. Once the challenge closes, check out the submissions of other classes on the CBC Canadian Music Class Playlist Challenge website.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

SAMPLE PLAYLIST

This sample playlist, with examples of the accompanying material, is here to get students and teachers thinking and imagining. This illustrates the combination of musical, visual, and text-based learning combined in the Playlist Challenge!

Raised Voices

Created by the MusiCounts Team | Toronto, ON & Richmond, BC

Playlist Description Example

This playlist celebrates songwriters and recording artists who found their musical voice in their school music program. Each one combines their musical skills with their perspective and view of the world. It is exciting to recognize the many different styles of music created by this list of 15 artists, each one piece of a musical mosaic. Some of these artists are enjoying established international careers while others are emerging artists bringing their music to new audiences. In every case, a music teacher helped them envision a future for their musical careers. So, take a listen and enjoy these raised voices.



Playlist Artwork Example

- Uja** Tanya Tagaq
- En Décembre** David Myles
- My Song to You** Aidan Farrell
- October** Alessia Cara
- Deciduous** Chief State
- Closer** Tegan and Sara
- Fast and Fragile** The Trade Company
- You Keep Reminding Me** Shawn Hook
- Home** Phé
- Call Me Maybe** Carly Rae Jepsen
- My Old Self** Wide Mouth Mason
- Poor Girl** Roan Shankaruk
- Empire** Marie-Mai
- We Were Kings** Neon Dreams
- Love Partakes of the Soul Itself** Shane Raman



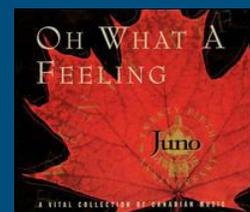
Playlist Video Example

click thumbnail above to view video

A Canadian Collection

Many songs and musicians who had their start in Canada have gone on to become chart-topping global hits.

In fact, In 1996, to celebrate the 25th JUNO Awards, the “**Oh What a Feeling**” box set was issued. This collection of 76 songs on 4 discs drew from many genres of music released between 1962 and 1996.



REFERENCES & HELPFUL WEBSITES

- » [Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences](#)
- » [Canadian Music Centre](#)
- » [Canadian Music Hall of Fame](#)
- » [Canadian Music Publishers Association](#)
- » [CBC Canadian Music Class Challenge](#)
- » [CBC Music](#)
- » [CRTC - Content Made by Canadians](#)
- » [The JUNO Awards](#)
- » [MusiCounts](#)
- » [National Music Centre](#)
- » [Polaris Music Prize](#)