Horn Lines and Jazz Shapes

NEW ORLEANS CULTURAL STUDIO | LESSON 55 | GRADES K–2 | CULTURE & SOURCES

Context before technique

New Orleans jazz grew through Black musicians, community spaces, and generations of improvisation.

Whose story is being told?

Teach this lesson through identified New Orleans institutions and, where possible, community-authored testimony. Name the people, places, and historical context in your examples. Explain what remains unknown or contested.

Responsible artistic engagement

Credit recorded musicians; emphasize listening rather than generic depictions of jazz entertainers.

Visual permissions

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Starter research sources

New Orleans Jazz Museum: Educator resources

https://nolajazzmuseum.org/educator-resources

Louisiana State Museums: Early Jazz

https://louisianastatemuseum.org/exhibit/congo-square-world-early-jazz-new-orleans

Louisiana Visual Arts Benchmarks

Louisiana Department of Education arts standards (official PDF)

Discussion prompts

- Who created or maintains this tradition, space, or object?
- What do outsiders often overlook?
- Which images would require permission, and whose voices are missing?

Teaching note

These starter sources support inquiry, not a complete ethnography. Prioritize up-to-date local perspectives and appropriately compensated cultural partnerships when possible.