

Name: _____

Date: _____

Jazz Music and Civil Rights

John Levy, Musician and Manager

Student Worksheet

Historical Context:

Between the end of the Civil War in 1865 and the Civil Rights Movement's achievements in the 1960s, many parts of the South had laws requiring that public places be racial segregated. Legislation known as Jim Crow laws separated people of color from whites in schools, housing, jobs, and public gathering places.

Overlapping with this period, from the early 1900s through the 1950s and 1960s, jazz music swelled in popularity. With its roots in African, Caribbean, and Latino musical traditions, jazz sat at the center of America's cultural crossroads. African American and white Americans often found themselves integrated while listening to or performing jazz music and this shared cultural experience was sometimes a bridge to breaking down racial barriers.

Instructions:

Answer the questions on these two pages using the accompanying primary sources found on the John Levy Oral History page <http://bit.ly/JohnLevy>.

These questions are based on the accompanying primary sources. They are designed to help you practice working with historical documents. Some of these documents have been edited, but all are authentic. As you analyze the documents, take into account the source of each document and any point of view that may be presented in the document.

Questions:

1. What early experiences helped to develop Levy's interest in music?



Name: _____

Date: _____

2. Cite one or more example of segregation in Levy's life. What is the significance of the signs and how do you think Levy and other African Americans would have responded to seeing one of those signs?

3. From Levy's recorded words and at least one other source, in what ways did jazz cross racial lines? Cite one instance where Levy's band pushed against the institution of segregation.

