



From the Top at Carnegie Hall
Episode 4: "From C to Shining Sea"
Airing on PBS (check local TV listings)
Available online at pbs.org

Learning Activity

Title: Musical Journey

Description: In this activity, students will watch a video segment about a young Mexican-American musician and the role of music in his life, looking for social, cultural, and emotional connections that support his musicianship. They will write about how their experiences are similar to and different from his.

Grade Level: 5-8, 9-12 (may be adapted for different grade levels)

National Music Standards: 9, Understanding music in relation to history and culture

Background

In this episode, we learn about the life and musical background of a 17-year-old French horn player, Eliodoro Vallecillo, whose talent and determination have created a promising musical path for him. His large and loving family lives in an area where gang violence has touched many, including Eliodoro's older brother, who died in a shooting. Eliodoro's choices and the people who have supported his musical development are described in the video segment. His story is an inspiring one.



Eliodoro Vallecillo onstage at Carnegie Hall

Materials: Computer with media player, speakers (if needed), video clip from Episode 4

Activity Instructions

- 1) Before viewing the video, **ask students** to write in their journals about their own talents and skills (athletic, academic, artistic, or other) and how they have developed those skills over the years. Who has helped by teaching them, encouraging them, or providing other kinds of support? Were there any turning points for them? Any setbacks? What kept them working to achieve higher standards?
- 2) **Watch the video segment** that includes Eliodoro's story. Ask students to notice the things that drew Eliodoro to music and encouraged him to continue to play. What emotions does Eliodoro express through his music? What social and cultural factors support his development and sustain his interest? What are his expectations about his future?
- 3) **Explore with your students** how their experiences are like Eliodoro's and how they differ – they might write in their journals or make a short video about their achievements.

Find out more!

About Eliodoro Vallicello

Eliodoro also appeared on From the Top's radio program when he was 16. You can hear him play and read his powerful story in his own words at:

<http://www.fromthetop.org/Programs/Performers.cfm?pid=2289>

About *norteño* music

In the scene in the auto shop, Eliodoro plays accordion with his friends and sings in a genre known as *norteño* ("Northern" in Spanish). You can find out more about this style of music on Wikipedia:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norteño_%28music%29

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