

# TEACHER'S TOOL KIT

GRADES 7-12

English Language Arts • Visual Art • Music • Social Studies



LIMITED RUN EXHIBITION • JULY 2016 – JUNE 2017

[CountryMusicHallOfFame.org/Portal](http://CountryMusicHallOfFame.org/Portal)

## ABOUT THIS KIT

Begin by asking your students what they know about the Zac Brown Band. Read the band member biographies included in this kit and featured in the **Digital Resource Portal** as a class or in groups. Then select activities that best correspond with your curriculum. The lessons in this guide can be supported by a visit to the Country Music Hall of Fame® and Museum or can be used unaccompanied by the exhibit.

## MEET THE ZAC BROWN BAND

Formed in Atlanta, Georgia, in 2002, the Zac Brown Band scored their first hit, “Chicken Fried,” in 2008. At eight members strong, the band’s lineup includes:

- **Zac Brown:** lead vocals and guitar
- **Coy Bowles:** organ, piano, clavinet, and guitar
- **Clay Cook:** organ, piano, clavinet, guitar, pedal steel guitar, and backing vocals
- **Daniel de los Reyes:** percussion
- **Jimmy De Martini:** fiddle and backing vocals
- **John Driskell Hopkins:** bass, guitar, banjo, ukulele, and backing vocals
- **Chris Fryar:** drums and percussion
- **Matt Mangano:** bass



Zac Brown Band, April 28, 2015, Tupelo, Mississippi

In 2011, band leader Zac Brown founded the Southern Ground Music & Food Festival to create opportunities for collaboration and to share cultural experiences. The festival has been staged in Nashville, Tennessee; Charleston, South Carolina; and other cities across the country. Brown also launched Camp Southern Ground, designed to help children overcome academic, emotional, or social difficulties. This communal spirit is also evident in the band’s creative collaborations with country music stars such as Charlie Daniels and Alan Jackson.



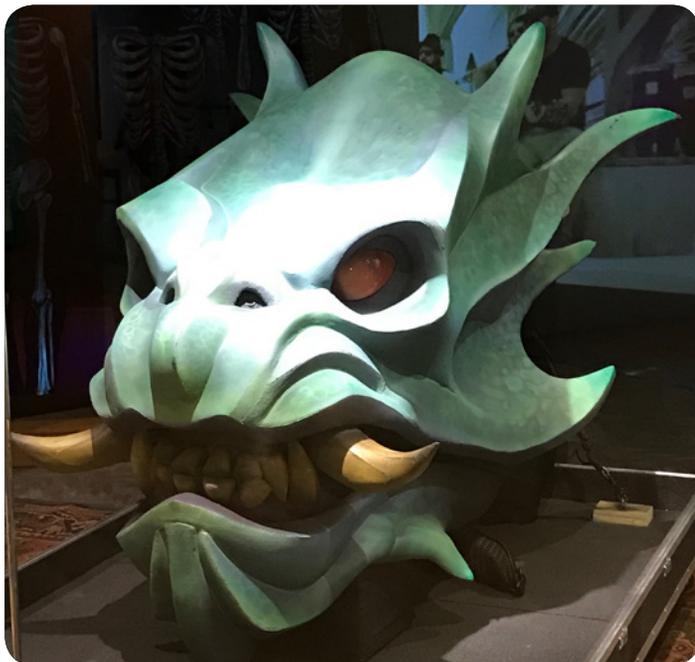
Dresses designed by Brown's wife, Shelly, and worn by actress Jamie Murray in the carnival-themed video for "Goodbye in Her Eyes." and cover of the vinyl version of the band's 2015 album, *Uncaged*.

## **MUSICAL INTERPRETATION**

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The Zac Brown Band uses strong imagery in their music videos and live performances, interpreting their songs in creative and entertaining ways. Costumes, props, and characters contribute to a story created for a performance. During the finale of their 2014 *Great American Road Trip Tour*, while performing the song "Junkyard," the band formed a large-scale dragon with this dragonhead.

- Watch the official music video for "Goodbye in Her Eyes." Consider the visual interpretation of the song. How is the imagery connected to the lyrics? How is it connected to the music?
- Listen to the song "Homegrown." Write the feelings and images that come to mind.
- Create a storyboard for a "Homegrown" music video based on your observations. Use cues for new characters, to describe emotions, and to explain the story.



Beginning in 2015, when the band performed "Junkyard" they paraded a dragon across the concert stage. The dragon's head was created by Jake Corrick and Benjamin Bayouth, with painting help from Kristian Baena. The body consisted of five sculpted figures perched on backpacks created by Zac Brown Customs and carried by band members.

## PASSION AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT

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Zac Brown is committed to developing Camp Southern Ground for children, “As a former camp counselor, I know how a positive camp experience can transform a child’s life. My dream is that children of all abilities will have an opportunity to experience the magic of the outdoors.” To achieve his goal of creating this camp, Brown founded Southern Ground, a lifestyle brand that features leather goods, handmade knives, jewelry, and a music and food festival.

- Research Zac Brown’s brand, Southern Ground, and the cause the business supports.
- Write a plan for raising money for this cause.
- Think about your talents, skills, and interests. Design an activity that you would like to teach other students.



Zac Brown standing in front of the construction site of the Peterson Dining Hall at Camp Southern Ground, 2015.



John Driskell Hopkins named three Modulus Graphite bass guitars after his daughters. His Vintage J model is “Faith.” His Funk Persuasion model is “Hope.” His Funk Unlimited model is “Grace.”

## WORKING TOGETHER

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The Zac Brown Band includes eight members. Each player contributes his own style and talents to the group, similar to how each student in your class contributes to make the class a whole. In the exhibit *Homegrown: Zac Brown Band*, each member has one or two objects that represent their role in the band.

- Choose one object from your personal life that represents you.
- Write a biography of yourself in four sentences and a label explaining the significance or meaning of the object you have chosen.
- Display the objects in a classroom exhibit.

## THE ART OF CULTURE

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Zac Brown cites Bob Marley as a musical influence, describes an interest in the Mexican tradition of ancestors returning from the dead to visit known as Dia de los Muertos, and notes his own Southern upbringing as cultural inspiration. These influences can be heard in the songs of the Zac Brown Band. These multi-cultural influences can also be seen in the Zac Brown Band's live performances and business ventures.

- Listen to "Castaway" for reggae influence. Discuss the origins of reggae.
- Look at the "Day for the Dead" costumes. Discuss this Mexican tradition.
- Chef Rusty is chef for the Zac Brown Band. Read his recipes. Discuss traditional Southern cuisine.
- Write, draw, or act out a cultural tradition from your family or neighborhood.
- Share with the class.



These black jumpsuits, embellished with spray-painted skeletons, were worn by the Zac Brown Band during performances of "Day for the Dead." Black lights illuminated the skeletons, created by Kristian Baena. Masks made by Baena and Jake Corrick added to the spooky effect.

Above: Mask worn by Jimmy De Martini



Jimmy De Martini and John Driskell Hopkins



Chef Rusty and Zac Brown at an Eat & Greet; June 10, 2013; Red Rocks, Colorado.



The Zac Brown Band serves guests at an Eat & Greet; July 7, 2015; Bangor, Maine.



Daniel de los Reyes played this conga drum in the video for “Jump Right In.” Designed by de los Reyes and percussion company Gon Bops, the conga drum is modeled after one used in the 1950s by Daniel’s father, Walfredo de los Reyes III, in Havana.



In these early journals, Brown wrote lyrics, drew illustrations, described meals and performances, and kept notes on his activities. The 2000 journal includes early lyrics to “Junkyard,” released as a single in 2015; the 2001 journal has early lyrics for “Goodbye in Her Eyes,” a hit in 2012.



Knilling Bucharest model 4/4 violin, owned by Jimmy De Martini.

Audio and visual supports can be found at [www.CountryMusicHallofFame.org/Portal](http://www.CountryMusicHallofFame.org/Portal)

School Program Funders:



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