TALKING POINTS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION: YES INDEED!
CELEBRATING THE GREAT AMERICAN BLUES TRADITION

Show and Theater Company:
- Yes Indeed! Celebrating the Great American Blues Tradition presented by JazzReach

Art form:
- An educational concert where the artists play the blues as well as teach the audience its history

Context:
- Blues as a music genre originated in the United States' Deep South by African-Americans in the 1870s. It takes its inspiration from African musical traditions, spirituals, and African-American work songs. Today we hear elements of blues in jazz, rock, gospel, country music, and R&B (“R&B” stands for “rhythm and blues”).

Main Concepts:
- Some of the most famous blues musicians include:
  - Muddy Waters – Known as the father of modern Chicago blues, his music was an inspiration for 1960s rock bands like The Rolling Stones and The Beatles.
  - Louis Jordan – His vocal style may have been one of the earliest influences on rap, particularly in songs like “Look Out (Sister)” and “Saturday Night Fish Fry.”
  - Bessie Smith – She earned the nickname the Empress of the Blues and was the most popular female blues singer of the 1920s and 1930s.

Special Things to Look For:
- Common elements of blues music include:
  - Repetition. Early blues songs were often just a single line repeated multiple times. In the 20th century we got the more common “AAB” pattern, where a line is repeated twice and then a different line ends the “verse.”
  - Call-and-response. An example might be a musician singing a line an instrument then "responds" to, or a vocalist singing a question and inviting the audience to sing the answer back.
    - Can you think of another song or style that incorporates a call-and-response format?
  - Lyrics about hardship, most frequently about troubles within African-American society.
  - Improvisation, or creating the music in the moment on stage.
    - What are some other musical styles that also use improvisation? (Possible answers: freestyle in rap, solos in rock)

- Blues music often includes the following instruments?
  - Guitar, piano, harmonica, bass, drums, trumpet, saxophone
    - Which ones were used at this performance? Were there others?

Theater Etiquette:
- Respect the theater, limit bathroom breaks, one person to a seat, do not kick the seats, no food or drink in the theater (bottled water okay), no audio, video recording or photography and remember to turn off cell phones/no texting (students and adults).

- How is watching live theater different than watching a movie or TV?
  - Can’t pause, rewind, or fast forward with live theater. Every sound students make and moving around can affect the performers and other members of the audience. Can’t pause, rewind, or fast forward with live theater. Every sound students make and moving around can affect the performers and other members of the audience.

Show info: Yes Indeed! ● Thursday, February 13, 2020 ● 11:30am ● Grades 5-8