Rich DelGrosso's Blues In The Schools

Bio

For the past 34 years Rich DelGrosso has lead a double life. By day he taught middle school science and digital arts, and in his "free time" he studied the blues, wrote articles for magazines and performed in clubs and at festivals. His articles have appeared in Blues Revue, Mandolin magazine, Living Blues, Frets and Footsteps. A valued and respected teacher in Detroit and Los Angeles, DelGrosso has retired early to pursue his second, but equal passion. He still conducts workshops on the blues, guitar and mandolin at festivals and camps across the country. He was, and still is, a student of "learning" and he understands how people learn at any age. His programs are uniquely designed for different age level groups, always stressing student participation and activity as appropriate.

American Popular Music today is like the canopy of a giant, spreading tree, supported and nourished by its roots, and they are called the blues.
 Rich DelGrosso

The Program:

Elementary: The "Building Blocks" of the Blues

1.)   Rhythm: Finding the Back Beat
2.)   From West Africa, the Call and Response
3.)   Melody: The Notes called "Blue"
4.)   12 Bars, more or less

Middle School: Use the "Blocks" to Make Your Own Blues

Assignment: Students prepare before the workshop by writing poetry in the AAB format used for most blues songs. They bring their Poems to the workshop where DelGrosso turns them into songs.

1.   Review of Rhythm
2.   The poetry of the Blues: "On the spot" creation of melodies for student poetry.
3.   Demo of "call and response" in the music, using voice and instrument.
4.   Blue Notes: How, when and why we use them.

High School/ College: 12 Bars across the Country

1.   Review of the "Building Blocks:" Rhythm, Melody, Poetry.
        Assignment: Same as Middle School with encouragement to write the music.

2.   Regional Style: "On the spot" creation of melodies for student poetry, performed in regional styles; Classic, Delta/ Chicago, Piedmont/New York, Texas/West Coast and Rock and Roll.