THE HISTORY OF AMERICA REFLECTED INITS SONGS

From variations on the “Star-Spangled Banner” as played by different bands in different eras, to sheet-music art documenting historical themes, the tapestry of American culture and life has been woven through music.

Experience the link between American history and song with a wide variety of audio, video and print resources from the collections of the Library of Congress!

TEACHERS AND STUDENTS CAN EXPLORE THE SONGS OF AMERICA SITE THROUGH

- Interactive maps of the United States which highlight musical traditions by state, region and “Mapping the Songs of the Civil War”
- A timeline illustrating the connection between culture and history
- Articles and essays on historical topics like immigration, politics, sports and industry connecting music to social studies themes
- Biographies of artists from the colonial era to the present, illuminating the people behind the music like Stephen Foster, Scott Joplin, Francis Hopkinson, Vera Hall, Aaron Copland, and Woody Guthrie
- Essays about the histories of specific songs, with links to audio recordings of different interpretations of the same song over time
- Keyword searches of the entire site – and the ability to narrow searches by time period, subject, and format – to hone in on just the right source

HISTORY SOCIAL SCIENCE MUSIC APPRECIATION

LOC.GOV/COLLECTIONS/SONGS-OF-AMERICA/ABOUT-THIS-COLLECTION

The Library of Congress celebrates the SONGS of AMERICA a digital resource

EDUCATOR’S GUIDE

The Library of Congress’s Songs of America online presentation explores American history through sound recordings, videos, sheet music and more. From popular and traditional songs, to poetic art songs and sacred music, the relationship of song to historical events from the nation’s founding to the present is highlighted through more than 88,000 online items and is documented in the work of some of our country’s greatest composers, scholars and performers.

Interior photo: Musician “Putti” sculpture by Philip Martiny on the Grand staircase of the Thomas Jefferson Building; Carol Highsmith, Prints and Photographs Division
Cover Art: Work Projects Administration Poster Collection, Prints and Photographs Division
Guide students with the sample questions as they respond to the primary source. Encourage them to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.

**O B S E R V E**

Have students identify and note details.

**S A M P L E Q U E S T I O N S:**
- Describe what you hear or see.
- What do you notice first?
- If you hear any voices, can you understand what is being sung or said?
- Does it sound like an interview or a conversation?
- Does it sound like a studio recording, or just "off the street"?
- If the performance is musical do you know the song, or do you recognize any instruments?
- What kind of design or image is printed on the sheet music?


**S A M P L E Q U E S T I O N S:**
- What historical period is this song from?
- Does this song tell us something about an historical event or how people felt about an historical event?
- Does the way the song is sung tell us how people felt?
- Was this song used during an historical event or was it created after an event?
- Was this sung by a particular group of people (ethnic groups, political parties, people with a cause)?
- What does the style of music tell us about the time period when it arose?

**F U R T H E R I N V E S T I G A T I O N**

Educator’s guide to “The Songs of America”

**B E G I N N I N G**

Have students write a description of the song in their own words.

**S A M P L E Q U E S T I O N S:**
- Who?
- When?
- Why?
- Where?
- How?

**I N T E R M E D I A T E**

Speculate about the purpose of the song and what its creators expected the song to accomplish. Do you think the song achieved its creators’ goal? Explain why you think so.

**S A M P L E Q U E S T I O N S:**
- What do you wonder about...
- Who?
- When?
- Where?
- Why?
- How?

**A D V A N C E D**

Think about what you already know about this period in history. How does this song support or contradict your current understanding of this period?

For more tips go to www.loc.gov/teachers