

California State University, San Bernardino

CSUSB ScholarWorks

Theses Digitization Project

John M. Pfau Library

1987

Using rock music lyrics to teach composition

Sean M Sullivan

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd-project>



Part of the [Educational Methods Commons](#), and the [Rhetoric and Composition Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Sullivan, Sean M, "Using rock music lyrics to teach composition" (1987). *Theses Digitization Project*. 4482. <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd-project/4482>

This Project is brought to you for free and open access by the John M. Pfau Library at CSUSB ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses Digitization Project by an authorized administrator of CSUSB ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@csusb.edu.

California State University
San Bernardino

// USING ROCK MUSIC LYRICS TO TEACH COMPOSITION //

A Project Submitted to
The Faculty of the School of Education
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of
Master of Arts
in
Education: Secondary Option

By

Sean M. Sullivan, M.A.
San Bernardino, California
1987

APPROVED BY:

[REDACTED]

Advisor

[REDACTED]

Committee Member

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| PROJECT SUMMARY | 1 |
| DEFINITIONS | 4 |
| ASSUMPTIONS | 4 |
| DELIMITATIONS | 5 |
| LIMITATIONS | 5 |
| REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE | 6 |
| PRE-WRITING ACTIVITIES | 17 |
| NOTES | 69 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 71 |

Project Summary

The objective of this project is to develop a series of pre-writing exercises which utilize rock music lyrics in the secondary English composition curriculum.

Writing has become a low priority in the curriculum among many secondary English teachers. Demands to cover other elements of English such as grammar, literature, vocabulary, and speech make the teacher's job difficult. Large class sizes tend to compound the problem. Though these obstacles are formidable ones, they are not the primary reasons for widespread writing deficiencies in secondary schools.

Fundamental to the writing problem is the stark reality that many English teachers are not well-prepared to teach composition. Rarely do English teachers embark on any extensive study in the area of expository writing in their own undergraduate programs. Further, most graduate programs in English focus their attention on literature, with little regard to writing instruction.

As a result of inadequate preparation, many teachers do not provide their students with appropriate stimuli for writing. Some, in fact, do not recognize the need for any type of prewriting activity to enliven the creative process of writing; they simply assign a theme topic and await the

outcome. Not surprisingly, English teachers receive uninspired essays that are too often poorly written.

Teachers are, additionally, sometimes limited by their own literary interests. A background and interest in literature can be a liability to the teaching of writing rather than an asset. Many English teachers fail to realize that very few of their students share their interest nor will they ever pursue post-secondary study in English.

Teachers should try to reach beyond their own limited orientations to provide students with a broad spectrum of exhilarating topics for their writing. Until this is done, they will continue to see mediocre results in the writing portion of the curriculum. If, in fact, the primary objective of a teaching unit in composition is to develop the students' writing skills, English teachers should be willing to employ subject-matter that would better reflect the interests of their students. It is imperative that the student-writer begins the writing process with a stimulus with which he can identify.

Recent educational commissions such as the Carnegie Foundation have concluded that one of the pertinent educational goals of high schools must be to help students "develop the capacity to communicate effectively through a mastery of language."¹ English teachers fall short of this objective if they insist on using traditional modes of instruction that result in widespread failure. The problem

then is that many of the strategies used in the teaching of composition have been ineffective.

It is the contention of this researcher that rock music lyrics can be used successfully as a stimulus for writing at the high school level. The assertion here is that the best of contemporary rock music can be utilized as material for student writing and will engage their own interests and experiences.

The purpose of this project is to develop pre-writing exercises that can be used in the secondary English classroom to aid in the instruction of writing. Further, many of these prewriting exercises can be used as an adjunct to more traditional forms of literature, forms with which the teacher may have more familiarity. To that end, an attempt is made to align some of these exercises with the Model Curriculum Standards adopted by the California State Board of Education in 1985.

Definitions

Composition shall refer to that phase of the secondary English curriculum in which the various modes of discourse such as description, narration, persuasion, and exposition are explored through extended written exercises known as essays.

Rock music lyrics shall refer to words of contemporary songs that contain significant thematic depth (as determined by the instructor) to be explored and commented on in student essays. Of particular value here, are songs that reflect pertinent social concerns rather than those that merely indulge in matters of teenage mores.

Writing stimulus shall refer to strategies that activate the writing process for the student.

Pre-writing activities shall refer to those initial phases of the writing process in which the teacher provides some type of introductory activity to generate ideas for the student-writer.

Assumptions

Most high school-age students have an interest in the rock music lyrics to be employed in pre-writing activities, particularly if they are directly involved in the selection of the material used.

The course of study of the average high school English class is multi-faceted and does not have a single

concentration on any one phase of the curriculum such as literature, composition, or grammar.

Delimitations

The pre-writing activities suggested herein are not intended to be used as the primary focus of a secondary English course, nor should they be construed as material to supplant traditional forms of literature.

These activities are not intended to be used in a sequential manner, unless otherwise indicated.

These activities are designed for use with secondary students and are not necessarily appropriate for younger or older students.

Limitations

In selecting the body of song lyrics which appear herein, the researcher was limited to those songs that were submitted by approximately 100 students in sophomore college-prep English classes as well as those already available to the researcher. Of the thirty-five songs chosen for inclusion in this project, over two thousand were considered. There are certainly many others, however, that are both appropriate and worthy of use in developing pre-writing exercises.

Review of the Literature

While many may see writing as a completed product of symbols on a page, it is indeed a process rather than a result. Research in the field of composition indicates that for an individual to begin at point A (with a blank piece of paper) and eventually arrive at point B (a finished product - whether it be a letter, a shopping list, a research paper, or whatever) a definite series of steps must be successfully implemented, consciously or otherwise.² Indeed, composition texts today emphasize the process of writing rather than the finished product itself.³

Further, the Model Curriculum Standards adopted by the California State Department of Education express the necessity for a process-approach to writing instruction. Among the numerous standards suggested for implementation are standards ten and eleven:

10. Districts and/or schools develop a systematic writing program.

Representative activities that exemplify this standard:

Writing as a process ...

In the pre-writing stage, teachers and class work together to find ideas, possible support, and possible strategies for organization.

11. All students will learn that writing is a process that includes stages called pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing. These writing stages include higher level thinking processes such as convergent and

divergent thinking, analysis and synthesis, and inferential and evaluative skills.⁴

In its suggested reforms of the secondary English curriculum, the State Department of Education in California recognized the significance of the writing process and has attempted to establish a state-wide program that perpetuates writing as a process rather than as a mere result of the writing task.

Like a sprinter who must get a good start out of the blocks if there is any hope of success, the student-writer must also experience preliminary success in order to have a strong finish. Meaningful pre-writing activities or stimuli must be provided by the writing teacher. "Teachers need to provide students with strategies which stimulate their brains during the pre-writing stage," states researcher Edith M. Sonnenburg.⁵ Sonnenburg asserts that pre-writing activities are of paramount importance to a successful writing program and that such "rhetorical strategies" can capitalize on research which establishes that the right and left hemispheres of the brain control distinct but inter-related functions that facilitate writing. Sonnenburg observes that:

... teachers often spend time teaching writing as a linear, product-based activity (which) produces the kind of writing teachers complain about ... the writing is boring and ... little or no learning has taken place through the writing.⁶

Just as Sonnenburg suggests, too few teachers focus on writing as a process and, as a result, do not experience much success. This multi-step process begins with pre-writing (also known as invention) and proceeds to the final draft. Sonnenburg contends that:

Such rhetorical strategies could help students to probe their subjects, to uncover what they already know about a subject and to discover what they can still learn about the subject.⁷

In their teacher-oriented text Student-Centered Language Arts and Reading, K-13: A Handbook for Teachers, James Moffett and Betty Jane Wagner touch upon the theories expounded by Sonnenburg. Additionally, they make a connection between music and brain information processing.

Recorded or live music can trigger a response that can be shaped for some purpose ... Pre-writing should thus occur constantly and naturally as part of the cycling of subject-matter in a student-centered curriculum.⁸

One such strategy is the use of music as a writing stimulus. But Moffett and Wagner readily admit that "... for the most part, music has not been used well in the teaching of language arts."⁹ In addition to the use of other popular media such as newspapers, magazines, and films, they

suggest that music can be used in different ways that achieve positive results.

Songs are a good stimulus for writing. The merge of the melodies and rhythms of words with those of music can steep children in the heady elixers that are the primitive fountainhead of all expression.¹⁰

Additionally, the Model Curriculum Standards suggest an integrated approach using a variety of methods: "Students actively respond ... through integrated writing, speaking, and listening activities."¹¹

In her discussion of pre-writing, Sonnenburg divides her rhetorical strategies into two types - brainstorming and heuristics. While both engage the writer in the process of invention and are designed to achieve similar results, their means differ. Brainstorming is a linear exercise whereby the individual or group lists items randomly with the hope that a topic will surface. Heuristics, on the other hand, is a procedure of systematic inquiry whereby the writer "discovers" his topic using a set of probes. Sonnenburg states:

By becoming aware of the systematic approaches to heuristics, students can guide their search for something meaningful to say. They can examine their subjects from multiple perspectives through conscious, open-ended inquiry which can transform their writing into learning.¹²

Here Sonnenburg points out that inquiry is involved in the writing process. The idea of questions leading to discovery is an educational concept that has long been utilized in the fields of science and social studies. "In view of the prevailing conditions in our culture," write Byron Massialas and Benjamin Cox in Inquiry in Social Studies, "the single most important goal of education should be the reflective examination of values and issues of current import."¹³ Certainly, any instructional strategy employing rock music lyrics in the pre-writing stage could help to achieve such an objective as well as effectively stimulate the writing process.

It is apparent that some type of strategy needs to be employed in the teaching of writing. Pre-writing, using various stimuli, is one proven approach. Incorporating what we know about the brain and its tendencies for information-processing, the use of music as a stimulus in the composition program seems to be an effective strategy.

In the preface to Teaching High School Composition, Gary Tate comments that: "It is an ironic and disturbing fact that English teachers are seldom trained to teach composition effectively."¹⁴ Considering that most secondary English teachers are subjected to a literature-based course of study in their own undergraduate education, this is not surprising. Few English teachers have had any extensive

study in composition as preparation for their teaching careers.

It is understandable, then, why so many English teachers rely heavily on literature in the teaching of writing. They feel most comfortable with it. Ironically, we are in an age where English teachers are often judged not on their students' proficiencies in literature, but on their abilities to write. As author Alan D. Englesman points out in "A Writing Program That Teaches Writing":

Too frequently, composition programs make writing a mere adjunct to reading and fail to develop specific writing skills in a planned sequential fashion ... the primary objective of a composition program should be to teach writing and the assignments should reflect this objective. 15

Some, however, defend the use of literature in the writing classroom. Robert Keith Miller suggests that it is essential that the writing teacher gives assignments that provide his students with adequate subject-matter from which to draw. Literature, says Miller, provides that subject-matter:

Assignments based on the reading of literature can be reassuring to students since they do not have to reach beyond the course to find evidence to support what they want to say ... carefully selected works of literature should provide a rich variety of possible topics for writing. 16

A lack of student interest in literature, however, coupled with the use of outdated composition texts which give writing assignments that induce both unintellectual and ineffective written response seems to be a significant problem for the writing teacher. Indeed, the Model Curriculum Standards admit that "students who are most likely to succeed in this curriculum are: ... those who have written about topics that have meaning to them and are thus prepared to express their convictions with greater clarity ..."17

One of the truly pertinent issues that English teachers must address, it would seem, would be the question of how to develop ways to stimulate interest in the craft of writing and, consequently, the improvement of that craft. Popular music is a resource that has gone virtually untapped in the composition curriculum. More specifically, rock music lyrics can be used in the composition class as an alternate and adjunct form of literature to provide students with stimulating topics for their writing.

If English teachers are to succeed in improving their students' writing abilities they must compromise their own interests and become more cognizant of the subjects that interest today's youth. To that end, rock music lyrics can be successfully employed in the composition class.

In "The Beatles and Freshman English", Stephan Carter states that "the problem of getting (the student) to write

something he cares about, of helping him to begin with his own springs of judgment or opinion, continues to be the biggest obstacle ..."¹⁸ As discussed earlier in this project, unstimulating composition texts and sophisticated literature will seldom serve to hurdle that obstacle. They do not often facilitate a good piece of writing because the student cannot relate to them as subject-matter. Carter goes on to say:

We want to arouse somehow the students' interest - even their passion - and at the same time teach them better writing skills through the common rhetorical elements of voice, tone, structure, continuity and so on ... there is in contemporary music a vast and rewarding writing potential for students.¹⁹

If a student's interest can be stirred by presenting a topic which is already familiar, the teacher has already won half the battle. In "Tightening the Agenda for U.S. Schools," Jim Bencivenga states that:

The single most important way to measure student progress is to ask them to write a serious essay on a consequential topic. And that, more than any other single measure, indicates whether they can take knowledge across the disciplines, put it together in a coherent way, and develop persuasively and creatively an independent idea of their own.²⁰

A key term here seems to be relevance. That is, a student's

success in writing often depends on the relevance of the subject-matter to that student's life.

"Before any topic can be justified as a theme assignment it must be within the limits of the high school student-writer's experience and understanding" says Samuel J. Rogal in Teaching Composition in the Senior High School.²¹ Rock music is within those limits. It's popularity with today's youth is unquestionable.

Some, however, might question its value and appropriateness in the English class. Still others might suggest that we are compromising our standards, weakening to the pressure. The notion that rock music, or any other popular media, is inferior and inappropriate is nothing more than a matter of opinion. In his article "In Defense of Popular Culture in the Classroom," Jesse Hise contends that:

To promote the teaching of popular culture does not mean we are lowering standards or that students are not interested in learning about language. Students are fascinated with language ... ask them to bring in a song whose words they like regardless of the music, and they will flood you with the best of popular poetry.²²

Yet there are those who simply feel that the popular music medium does not lend itself to serious study. Ironically, those same educators who attempt to maintain the sacredness of scholarly traditions might be surprised to learn that universities like Cambridge and Oxford considered English

literature unworthy of any extensive attention as late as the turn of the century, opting instead for the treatment of Greek and Latin literature. So the question of what is and what isn't acceptable material involves, among other criteria, time.

The dilemma of what material to use to elicit good writing is considered by Rogal. He explains:

... unless the teacher can direct the complex but important facets of teenage life into the pages of his students' writing, he will quickly discover that the development of their writing skills is being hampered to a great extent as a result of his own erudite stubbornness. Perhaps the largest single reason behind the failure of any composition program is the damnable insistence of too many teachers that their students attempt nothing but scholarly trivia on literary criticism, an exercise that is beyond the reach of even their own meager capabilities.²³

It is not suggested here that teachers of English use rock music lyrics exclusively as the single tool in the teaching of writing, but rather as one of many techniques to fulfill the objectives of a composition program. As John C. Gerber states in "Suggestions for the Commonsense Reform of the English Curriculum": "The real challenge will be to remain flexible enough to suit the material to the students and to build bridges between the popular and those works that we have traditionally most admired."²⁴

With pre-writing activities like those that follow, such lofty goals become more attainable. Additionally, many of the activities herein align themselves with the Model Curriculum Standards. Such an alignment may lend credence to the concept that a literature-based curriculum, such as that suggested in the Model Curriculum Standards, must also include literature-based writing assignments, particularly if those assignments elicit positive results in the teaching of composition.

Pre-Writing Activities

Procedure for Pre-Writing Activities

The suggested procedure for the pre-writing assignments detailed herein involves the following steps:

1. Teacher provides some type of direct orientation, through lecture or other means, to the mode of discourse being addressed in that particular compositional unit. The types of essays, followed by specific concepts relating to that particular mode, might be categorized in the following manner.

- a. Exposition - comparison/contrast, classification, definition, analysis, illustration, identification.
- b. Narration - action and sequence, point of view, suspense.
- c. Description - sensory impressions, dominant impression, selective description, radiating order, random impressions.
- d. Persuasion - appeals to emotion, inductive reasoning, deductive reasoning, ethical appeals.

(Note: Because of the lyrical content, the songs contained in this project probably best lend themselves to the modes of exposition and persuasion although descriptive and narrative applications are certainly possible.)

2. (IF APPLICABLE) Through class discussion or other means, the teacher reviews some literary theme or concept exemplified in a particular work of literature previously presented in class.

3. The student is given a copy of the song lyrics applicable to any given writing assignment.

4. (IF APPLICABLE) At the teacher's discretion, students may be shown a thematic or conceptual connection between the lyrics of the song(s) and a particular work of literature. Through this connection, the student is given the opportunity to see the significance and relevance of literary themes and concepts as they apply in a contemporary form.

5. Students should be allowed to listen to the songs at least twice. As prescribed in the Model Curriculum Standards:

Listening activities normally precede and sometimes follow writing activities. Listening experiences develop the necessary sense of audience and interplay necessary to good communication.²⁵

6. The teacher outlines the specific objectives of the writing assignment, giving the exact requirements and expectations.

7. At the teacher's discretion, students may be given time to consider the topic independently and/or through class discussion.

This concludes the pre-writing stage of the writing process.

(Depending upon the nature of the assignment, seldom will a one hour class period provide sufficient time to advance beyond the pre-writing stage.)

Specific Application of the Model Curriculum Standards

Contained in the Model Curriculum Standards are "Examples of Possible Thematic Units in Literature."²⁶ Several of these thematic units were considered in selecting the song lyrics in the section that follows. Writing instructors attempting to employ these lyrics in exercises might refer directly to the Model Curriculum Standards for literary works that exemplify the thematic units listed below if the objective is to draw comparisons between the lyrics and some other form of literature.

1. The Search for Justice and Dignity
2. Experiences with War and Peace
3. Individuals and the Need for Acceptance
4. The Individual and Society
5. Journey to Personal Fulfillment
6. Fantasy and the Unexplained

The song lyrics in this section are divided into subsections according to the thematic units listed above.

The Search for Justice and Dignity

INDIAN SUNSET

(E. John/B. Taupin)

As I woke this evening with the smell of woodsmoke clinging
Like a gentle cobweb hanging upon a painted teepee
Oh I went to see my chieftain with my warlance and my woman
For he told us that the yellow moon would very soon be leaving.

This I can't believe I said, I can't believe our warlord's dead.
Oh, he would not leave the chosen ones to the buzzards and the
soldiers guns.

Oh, great father of the Iroquois ever since I was young,
I've read the writing of the smoke
And breast-fed on the sounds of drums
I've learned to hurl the tomahawk and ride a painted pony wild,
And make a chieftain's daughter mine.

And now you ask that I should watch
The red man's race be slowly crushed!
What kind of words are these to hear
From Yellow Dog, whom white man fears?

I take only what is mine Lord:
My pony, my squaw and my child.
I can't stay to see you die, along with my tribe's pride.
I go to search for the yellow moon
And the fathers of our sons,
Where the red sun sinks in the hills of gold
And the healing waters run.

Trampling down the prairie rose,
Leaving hoof tracks in the sand,
Those who wish to follow me, I welcome with my hands.
I heard from passing renegades Geronimo was dead.
He'd been laying down his weapons
When they filled him full of lead.

Now there seems no reason why I should carry on;
In this land that once was my land, I can't find a home.
It's lonely and it's quiet, and the horse soldiers are coming,
And I think it's time I strung my bow
And ceased my senseless running.

For soon I'll find the yellow moon along with my loved ones,
Where the buffaloes graze in clover fields
Without the sounds of guns.

And the red sun sinks at last into the hills of gold
And peace to this young warrior comes
With a bullet hole.

(from the album "Madman Across the Water" by Elton John)

ILLEGAL ALIEN

(T. Banks/P. Collins/M. Rutherford)

Got out of bed, wasn't feeling too good
With my wallet and my passport, a new pair of shoes
The sun is shining so I head for the park,
With a bottle of tequila and a new pack of cigarettes

I got a cousin, and she got a friend,
Who thought that her aunt knew a man who could help
At his apartment I knocked on the door
He wouldn't come out until he got paid.
Now don't tell anybody what I wanna do
If they find out you know that they'll never let me through

It's no fun being an illegal alien
It's no fun being an illegal alien.

Down at the office, had to fill out the forms
A pink one, a red one, the colors you choose,
Up to the counter to see what they think
They said "It doesn't count man, it ain't written in ink."

Don't trust anybody, least not around here, 'cause
It's no fun being an illegal alien
It's no fun being an illegal alien

Consideration for your fellow man
Wouldn't hurt anybody,
Sure fits in with my plan
Over the border
There lies the promised land
So don't tell anybody what I wanna do
If they find out you know they'll never let me through

It's no fun being an illegal alien
It's no fun being an illegal alien

(from the album "Genesis" by Genesis)

Experiences with War and Peace

LIVES IN THE BALANCE
(J. Browne)

I've been waiting for something to happen
For a week or a month or a year
With the blood in the ink of the headlines
And the sound of the crowd in my ear.
You might ask what it takes to remember
When you know that you've seen it before
Where a government lies to its people
And a country is drifting to war.

And there's a shadow on the faces
Of the men who send the guns
To the wars that are fought in places
Where their business interest runs.

On the radio talk shows and the T.V.
You hear one thing again and again
How the U.S.A. stands for freedom
And we come to the aid of a friend.
But who are the ones that we call our friends-
These governments killing their own?
Or the people who can't take it anymore
And they pick up a gun or a brick or a stone.

There are lives in the balance
There are people under fire
There are children at the cannons
And there is blood on the wire

There's a shadow on the faces
Of the men who fan the flames
Of the wars that are fought in places
where we can't even say the names

They sell us the President the same way
They sell us our clothes and our cars
They sell us everything from youth to religion
The same time they sell us our wars.
I want to know who the men in the shadows are
I want to hear someone asking them why.
They can be counted on to tell us who our enemies are
But they're never the ones to go fight or die

And there are lives in the balance
And there are people under fire
There are children at the cannons
And there is blood on the wire.

(from the album "Lives in the Balance" by Jackson Browne)

MADNESS

(E. John/G. Osborne)

The fuse is set and checked once more
Then left beside a back street door
And in the cold grey light
Someone sees a shadow run through the night and out of sight

They hide inside a smoke-filled room
To hear at last the blast of doom
And so the deed is done
They listen to the final countdown begun...three...two...one

Madness
It's a kind of madness that turns good men bad
And we're helpless
Caught up in the madness of a world gone mad

The roar of fire rings out on high
As flame lights up the black night sky
A child screams out in fear
A hopeless cry for help but no one is near enough to hear

As walls collapse and timbers flare
The smell of death hangs in the air
When help at last arrives
They try to fight the flames but nothing survives
Of all those lives

And it's madness--every time a victim dies
There is madness--burning in a blind man's eyes
And it's madness--hidden in the hate and pain
There is madness--burning in a wildman's brain

And it's madness--everytime the bullets start
There is madness--burning in a poor man's heart
And it's madness--something that we can't control
There is madness--burning in a madman's soul

MADNESS, MADNESS, etc.

(from the album "A Single Man" by Elton John)

BUILDING THE PERFECT BEAST
(D. Henley/D. Kortchmar)

The power of reason, the top of the heap
We're the ones who can kill the things we don't eat
Sharper than a serpent's tongue
Tighter than a bongo drum
Quicker than a one-night stand
Slicker than a mambo band

And now the day has come
Soon he will be released
Glory Hallelujah!
We're building the Perfect Beast
(Building, building, etc.)

It's Olympus this time--Olympus or bust
For we have met the enemy--and he is us

And now the day has come
Soon he will be released
Glory Hallelujah!
We're building the perfect beast

Ever since we crawled out of the ocean
And stood upright on land
There are somethings we just don't understand
Relieve all pain and suffering
And lift us out of the dark
Turn us all into Methuselah--
But where are we gonna park?
(Building, building, etc.)

The secrets of eternity--
We've found the lock and turned the key
We're shakin' up those building blocks
Going deeper into that box

And now the day has come
Soon he will be released
Glory Hallelujah!
We're building the perfect beast!
(Building, building, etc.)

All the way to Malibu from the land of the talking drum
Just look how far, look how far we've come

(from the album "Building the Perfect Beast" by Don Henley)

LAND OF CONFUSION

(T. Banks/P. Collins/M. Rutherford)

I must've dreamed a thousand dreams
Been haunted by a million screams
I can hear the marching feet
They're moving into the street

Now did you hear the news today?
They say the danger's gone away
But I can see the fire's still alight
Burning into the night

Too many men
Too many people
Making too many problems
And not much love to go round
Can't you see this is the land of confusion

This is the world we live in
And these are the hands we're given
Use them and let's start trying
To make it a place worth living in

Superman where are you now?
Everything's gone wrong somehow
The men of steel, men of power
Are losing control by the hour

This is the time
This is the place
So we look for the future
But there's not much love to go round
Tell me why this is the land of confusion

I remember long ago
When the sun was shining
The stars were bright
All through the night
And the sound of your laughter
As I held you tight
So long ago

(continued)

I won't be coming home tonight
My generation will put it right
We're not just making promises
That we know we'll never keep

Too many men
Too many people
Making too many problems
And not much love to go round
Can't you see this is the land of confusion?

(from the album "Invisible Touch" by Genesis)

|
|
|
|
|
|

MANHATTAN PROJECT
(G. Lee/A. Lifeson/N.Peart)

Imagine a time
When it all began
In the dying days of a war
A weapon--that would settle the score
Whoever found it first
Would be sure to do their worst--
They always had before...

Imagine a man
Where it all began
A scientist pacing the floor
In each nation--always eager to explore
To build the best big stick
To turn the winning trick--
But this was something more ...

The big bang took and shook the world
Shot down the rising sun
The end was begun--it would hit everyone
When the chain reaction was done

Too big shots try to hold it back
Fools try to wish it away
The hopeful depend on a world without end
Whatever the hopeless may say

Imagine a place
Where it all began
They gathered from across the land
To work in the secrecy of the desert sand
All of the brightest boys
To play with the biggest toys--
More than they bargained for...

Imagine a man
When it all began
The pilot of "Enola Gay"
Flying out of the shockwave
On that August day
All the powers that be
And the course of history
Would be changed for evermore...

(from the album "Power Windows" by Rush)

THE LAST DOMINO

(T. Banks/P. Collins/M. Rutherford)

In silence and darkness
We held each other near that night
We prayed it would last forever...

Blood on the windows
Millions of ordinary people are there
They gaze at the scenery
They act as if it is perfectly clear
Take a look at the mountains
Take a look at the beautiful river of blood

The liquid surrounds me
I fight to rise from this river of hell
I stare round about me
Children are swimming and playing with boats
Their features are changing
Their bodies dissolve and I am alone

Now see what you've gone and done!

Now you never did see such a terrible thing
As was seen last night on the T.V.
Maybe if we're lucky, they'll show it again
Such a terrible thing to see

There's nothing you can do when you're the next in line
You've got to go, Domino

Now I'm one with the living and I'm feeling just fine
I know just what I must do
Play the game of happiness and never let on
That it only lives on in a song

There's nothing you can do when you're the next in line
You've got to go, Domino

Do you know what you have done?
Do you know what you've begun?

In silence and darkness
Hold each other near tonight
For will it last forever?

There's nothing you can do when you're next in line
You've gotta go, Domino

(from the album "Invisible Touch" by Genesis)

TERRITORIES

(G. Lee/A. Lifeson/M. Peart)

I see the Middle Kingdom between Heaven and Earth
Like the Chinese call the country of their birth
We all figure that our homes are set above
Other people than the ones we know and love

In every place with a name
They play the same territorial game.
Hiding behind the lines
Sending up warning signs

The whole wide world
An endless universe
Yet we keep looking through
The eyeglass in reverse
Don't feed the people
But we feed the machines
Can't really feel
What international means

In different circles
We keep holding our ground
Indifferent circles
We keep spinning round and round

We see so many tribes--overrun and undermined
While their invaders dream of lands they've left behind
Better people--better food--better beer
Why move around the world when Eden was so near?

The bosses get talking so tough
And if it wasn't evil enough
We get the drunken and the passionate pride
Of the citizen along for the ride

They shoot without shame
In the name of a piece of dirt
For a change of accent
Or the color of your shirt
Better the pride that resides
Than the pride that divides
When a colorful rag is unfurled

(from the album "Power Windows" by Rush)

THEM AND US

(D. Henley/D. Kortchmar)

One finger on the button
One finger up his nose
Johnny's in some cornfield,
The Early Warning blows

Bigger is better
More is more
Look up, America!
Gonna even up the score

Get ready, boys
Third times a charm
Don't need no sweater
It's gonna keep you warm.
If we can't have the ball,
There won't be any winner this time

Them and Us
Them and Us
Ashes to ashes
Dust to dust

In forty-five minutes
It'll all be done
We'll all be good and crispy
But we'll still be number one!

And if things go from bad to worse
We can still kill them, even if they kill us first
If we can't have the ball
There won't be any winner this time

Them and Us
Them and Us
Ashes to ashes
Dust to dust

Them and Us
Them and Us
Ashes to ashes
Dust to dust

(from the album "I Can't Stand Still" by Don Henley)

Individuals and the Need for Acceptance

MISS AMERICA
(James Young)

You were the apple of the public's eye
As you cut the ribbon at the local mall
A mirage for both you and us
How can it be real?

We loved your body in that photograph
Your home state sure must be proud
The queen of the United States
Have you lost your crown?

Well aren't you, Miss America
Don't you, Miss America
Won't you, Miss America
Our love?

Are you really who we think you are?
Or does your smile seem to wear you down?
Is the girl who you once were
Screaming to jump out?

Is the dream that you must live
A disease for which there is no cure?
This rollercoaster ride you're on
Won't stop to let you off

Well aren't you, Miss America
Don't you, Miss America
Won't you, Miss America
Our love?

Well it's true, just take a look
The cover sometimes makes the book
And the judges do they ever ask
To read between the lines?

In your cage, at the human zoo
They all stop to look at you
Next year, what will you do
When you have been forgotten?

Well aren't you, Miss America
Don't you, Miss America
Won't you, Miss America
Our love?

(from the album "The Grand Illusion" by Styx)

TALKING OLD SOLDIERS

(E. John/B. Taupin)

"Why hello, say can I buy you another glass of beer?"
"Well thanks a lot, that's kind of you,
It's nice to know you care.
These days there's so much going on,
No one seems to wanna know.
I may be just an old soldier to some
But I know how it feels to grow old.

Yea that's right,
You can see me here most every night
You'll always see me staring
At the walls and at the lights
Funny, I remember, oh its year's ago I'd say
I'd stand at that bar
With my friends, who've passed away,
And drink three times the beer
That I can drink today
Yes I know how it feels to grow old

I know what you're sayin' son
There goes old man Joe again
Well, I may be made at that, I've seen enough
To make a man go out of his brains.
Well do they know what it's like
To have a graveyard as a friend?
'Cause that's where they are boy,
All of them
Don't seem likely I'll make friends like that again"

"Well it's time I moved off,
But it's been great, just listening to you
And I might even see ya next time I'm passing through
You're right, there's so much goin' on
No one seems to wanna know
So keep well, keep well old friend
And have another drink on me
Just ignore all the others
You've got your memories"

(from "Tumbleweed Connection" by Elton John)

THE GRAND ILLUSION

(Dennis De Young)

Welcome to the grand illusion
Come on in and see what's happening
Pay your price
Get your tickets for the show

The stage is set,
The bank starts playing
Suddenly your heart is pounding
Wishing secretly you were a star

But don't be fooled by the radio
The T.V. or the magazines
They'll show you photographs
Of how your life should be
But they're just someone else's fantasy

So if you think your life
Is complete confusion
'Cause you never win the game
Just remember that
It's a grand illusion
And deep inside we're all the same

America spells competition
Join us in our blind ambition
Get yourself a brand new motor car

So if you think you life
Is complete confusion
'Cause your neighbor's got it made
Just remember that
It's a grand illusion
And deep inside we're all the same

But someday soon we'll stop to ponder
What on earth's this spell we're under
We made the grade and still we wonder
Who the hell we are!

(from the album "The Grand Illusion" by Styx)

The Individual and Society

4

FOR AMERICA

(J. Browne)

As if I really didn't understand
That I was another part of their plan
I went off lookin' for the promise
Believing in the Motherland
And from the comfort of a dreamer's bed
And the safety of my own head
I went on speaking of the future
While other people fought and bled
The kid I was when I first left home
Was looking for his freedom and a life of his own
But the freedom that he found wasn't quite as sweet
When the truth was known
I have prayed for America
I was made for America
It's in my blood and in my bones
By the dawn's early light
By all I know is right
We're gonna reap what we have sown
As if freedom was a question of might
As if loyalty was black and white
You hear people say it all the time--
"My country, wrong or right"
I want to know what that's got to do
With what it takes to find out what's true
With everyone from the President on down
Trying to keep it from you
The thing I wonder about the Dads and Moms
Who send their sons to the Vietnams
Will they really think their way of life
Has been protected as the next war comes?
I have prayed for America
I was made for America
Her shining dream plays in my mind
By the rockets red glare
A generation's blank stare
We better wake her up this time
The kid I was when I first left home
Was looking for freedom and a life of his own
But the freedom that he found wasn't quite as sweet
When the truth was known
I have prayed for America
I was made for America
I can't let go till she comes round
Until the land of the free
Is awake and can see
And until her conscience has been found
(from the album "Lives in the Balance" by Jackson Browne)

RAIN ON A SCARECROW
(J. Mellencamp/G. Green)

Scarecrow on a wooden cross, blackbird in the barn
Four hundred empty acres that used to be my farm
I grew up like my daddy did, my grandpa cleared this land
When I was five I walked this fence while Grandpa held my hand

Rain on the scarecrow
Blood on the plow
This land fed a nation
This land made proud

And son I'm just sorry
There's no legacy for you now
Rain on the scarecrow
Blood on the plow

The crops we grew last summer weren't enough to pay the loans
Couldn't buy the seed to plant this spring and the Farmer's Bank
foreclosed
Called my old friend Shepman up to auction off the land
He said "John it's just my job and I hope you understand."

Hey callin' it your job, ol' hoss, sure don't make it right
But if you want me to, I'll say a prayer for your soul tonight
And grandma's on the front porch swing with a Bible in her hand
Sometimes I hear her signing "Take me to the promised land"

When you take away a man's dignity
He can't work his fields and cows
There'll be blood on the scarecrow
Blood on the plow

I think about my grandpa
And my neighbors and my name
And some nights I feel like dyin'
Like the scarecrow in the rain

Rain on the scarecrow
Blood on the plow
This land fed a nation
This land made me proud
And son I'm just sorry
They're just memories for you now
Rain on the scarecrow
Blood on the plow

(from the album "Scarecrow" by John Cougar Mellencamp)

A MONTH OF SUNDAYS
(D. Henley)

I used to work for Harvester, I used to use my hands
I used to make the tractors and the combines
That plowed and harvested this great land
Now I see my handiwork on the block, everywhere I turn
And I see the clouds 'cross the weathered faces
And I watch the harvest burn

I quit the plant in '57, had some time for farmin' then
Banks back then were lending money--
The banker was the farmer's friend
And I've seen dog days and dusty days
Late Spring snow and early fall sleet,
I've held the leather reins in my hands
And felt the soft ground under my feet

Between the hot, dry weather and the taxes and the Cold War
It's been hard to make ends meet
But I always kept the clothes on our backs;
I always put the shoes on our feet

My grandson, he comes home from college
He says, "We get the government we deserve."
My son-in-law just shakes his head and says
"That little punk, he never had to serve!"
And I sit here, in the shadow of the suburbs
And look out across these empty fields,
I sit here in earshot of the bypass
And all night I listen to the rushin' of the wheels

The big boys, they all got computers, got incorporated too,
Me, I just know how to raise things
That was all I ever knew
And now it all comes down to numbers
Now I'm glad that I have quit
Folks these days just don't do nothing
Simply for the love of it.

(continued)

I went into town on the Fourth of July
Watched 'em parade past the Union Jack
Watched 'em break out the brass and beat on the drum
One step forward and two steps back
And I saw a sign on Easy Street, said "Be prepared to stop"
Pray for the independent little man
I don't see next year's crop

And I sit here--on the backporch in the twilight
And I hear the crickets hum
I sit here and watch the lightning in the distance
But the showers never come
I sit here and listen to the wind blow, I sit and rub my hands
I sit here and listen to the clock strike
And I wonder when I'll see my companion again

(from "Building the Perfect Beast" by Don Henley)

MY HOMETOWN
(B. Springsteen)

I was eight years old and running
With a dime in my hand
Into the bus stop to pick up a paper
For my old man

I'd sit on his lap in the big old Buick
And steer as we drove through town
He'd tostle my hair and say
"Son take a look around,
This is your hometown
This is your hometown
This is your hometown
This is your hometown"

In '65 tension was running high
At my high school
There was a lot of fights
Between the blacks and the whites
There was nothing you could do

Two cars at a light on a Saturday night
In the back seat there was a gun
Words were passed in a shotgun blast
Troubled times have come--
To my hometown
My hometown
My hometown
My hometown

Now Main Street's whitewashed windows
And vacant stores
Seems like there ain't nobody wants
To come down here no more

They're closin' down the textile mill
Across the railroad tracks
Foreman says these jobs are goin' boys
And they ain't comin' back
To your hometown
Your hometown
Your hometown
Your Hometown

(continued)

Last night me and Kate laid in bed talkin'
About getting out
Packing up our bags
Maybe heading south

I'm thirty-five, we got a son of our own
Last night I sat him behind the wheel
And said "Son, take a look around
This is your hometown."

(from "Born in the U.S.A." by Bruce Springsteen)

PRAY IN THE U.S.A.

(M. Cryer)

Teacher sayin'
Can't be prayin'
Says it's against the rules

We're free today
In the U.S.A.
But not here in my school

I got news for you today
You can't stop a heart that prays

You can still pray in the U.S.A.
You can still pray in the U.S.A.
Until they steal your heart away
You can still pray in the U.S.A.

I'm no rebel
Just a pebble
Stuck in some judge's shoe

My bended knee
May not be free
But my heart's gonna bust on through

They're pourin' fuel on the fire
Tryin' to stop what God desires

Someday we may hear it
"Praying is a felony"
Guess they'll call us criminals
Guess that's what I'll be

(from the album "Fuel on the Fire" by Morgan Cryer)

Journey to Personal Fulfillment

HIGHER LOVE
(S. Winwood/W. Jennings)

Think about it, there must be higher love
Down in the heart, or hidden in the stars above
Without it, life is wasted time
Look inside your heart
I'll look inside mine

Things look so bad everywhere
In this whole world what is fair?
We walk blind and we try to see
Falling behind in what could be

Bring me a higher love
Bring me a higher love
Bring me a higher love
Where's that higher love,
I keeping thinking of?

Worlds are turning and we're just hanging on
Facing our fear and standing out there alone
A yearning, and it's real to me
There must be someone who feels for me

Things look so bad everywhere
In this world, what is fair?
We walk blind and we try to see
Falling behind in what could be

Bring me a higher love
Bring me a higher love
Bring me a higher love
Where's that higher love,
I keep thinking of?

I will wait for it
I'm not too late for it
Until then, I'll sing my song
To cheer the night along

I could light the night up with my soul on fire
I could make the sun shine from pure desire
Let me feel that love come over me
Let me feel how strong it could be

Bring me a higher love
Bring me a higher love
Bring me a higher love
Where's that higher love I keep thinking of?

(from the album "Back in the High Life" by Steve Winwood)

THE PRETENDER
(J. Browne)

I'm going to rent myself a house
In the shade of the freeway
I'm going to pack myself a lunch in the morning
And go to work each day
And when the evening rolls around
I'll go on home and lay my body down
And when the mornin' light comes streamin' in
I'll get up and do it again
Amen

I want to know what became of the changes
We waited for love to bring
Were they only the fitful dreams
Of some greater awakening
I've been aware of the time goin' by
They say in the end it's the wink of an eye
And when the mornin' light comes streamin' in
You'll get up and do it again
Amen

Caught between the longing for love
And the struggle for the legal tender
Where the sirens sign and the church bells ring
And the junkman pounds his fender
Where the veterans dream of the fight
Fast asleep at the traffic light
And the children solemnly wait
For the ice cream vendor
Out into the cool of the evening
Strolls the pretender
He knows that all his hopes and dreams
Being and end there

Ah the laughter of the lovers
As they run through the night
Leaving nothing for the others
But to choose off and fight
And tear at the world with all their might
While the ships bearing their dreams
Sail out of sight

(continued)

I'm going to be a happy idiot
And struggle for the legal tender
Where the ads take aim and lay their claim
To the heart and the soul of the spender
And believe in whatever may lie
In those things that money can buy
-Thought true love could have been a contender
Are you there?
Say a prayer for the pretender
Who started out so young and strong
Only to surrender

from the album "The Pretender" by Jackson Browne)

MIDDLETOWN DREAMS
(G. Lee/A. Lifeson/N. Peart)

The office door closed early
The hidden bottle came out
The salesman turned to close the blinds
A little slow now, a little stout

But he's still heading down those tracks
Any day now for sure
Another day as drab as today
Is more than a man can endure

Dreams flow across the heartland
Feeding on the fires
Dreams transport desires
Drive you when you're down--
Dreams transport the ones
Who need to get out of town

The boy walks with his best friend
Through the fields of early May
They walk awhile in silence
One close--one far away

But he'd be climbing on this bus
Just him and his guitar
To blaze across the heavens
Like a brilliant shooting star

The middle-age madonna
Calls her neighbors on the phone
Day by day the seasons pass
And leave her life alone

But she'll go walking out that door
On some bright afternoon
To go and paint big cities
From a lonely attic room

It's understood
By every single person
Who'd be elsewhere if they could
So far so good
And life's not unpleasant
In their little neighborhood

They dream in Middletown...

(from the album "Power Windows" by Rush)

EVERYBODY HAS A DREAM
(B. Joel)

While in these days of quiet desparation
As I wander through the world in which we live
I search everywhere for some new inspiration
But it's more than cold reality can give

If I need a cause for celebration
Or a comfort I can use to ease the mind
I rely on my imagination
And I dream of an imaginary time

I know that everybody has a dream
Everybody has a dream
And this is my dream, my own
Just to be at home
And to be all alone...with you

If I believe in all the words I'm saying
And if a word from you can bring a better day
Then all I have are these games that I've been playing
To keep my hope from crumbling away

So let me lie and let me go on sleeping
And I will lose myself in palaces of sand
And all the fantasies that I have been keeping
Will make the empty hours easier to understand

I know that everybody has a dream
Everybody has a dream
And this is my dream, my own
Just to be at home
And to be alone...with you

(from the album "The Stranger" by Billy Joel)

WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS

(F. Mercury)

I've paid my dues
Time after time
I've done my sentence
But committed no crime
And bad mistakes
I've made a few
I've had my share of sand
Kicked in my face
But I've come through!

And we are the champions, my friends
And we'll keep on fighting till the end
We are the champions
We are the champions
No time for losers
'Cause we are the champions
Of the world

I've taken my bows
And my curtain calls
You brought me fame and fortune
And everything that goes with it
I thank you all.

But it's been no bed of roses
No pleasure cruise
I consider it a challenge
Before the whole human race
And I ain't gonna lose!

We are the champions, my friends
And we'll keep on fighting till the end
We are the Champions
We are the Champions
No time for losers
'Cause we are the Champions--
Of the world

(from the album "News of the World" by Queen)

NEVER SURRENDER

(R. Emmett/M. Levine/G. Moore)

Out in the streets inspiration comes hard
The joker of the deck keeps handin' me his card
Smilin' friendly he takes me in
Then breaks my back in a game I can't win

Jivin', hustlin', what's it all about?
Everybody always wants the easy way out
Thirty gold pieces for the Judas kiss
What's a nice boy doin' in a place like this?

Never Surrender
Keep your dreams alive
Never Surrender
Hold your head up high

Modern apathetics, you got plenty of nothin' to say
Some are born to follow, some will make their own way
Today you found a hero, tomorrow you'll forget
You're lookin' for convenient truth
You haven't found it yet

You don't make commitments, no time for regrets
Easy come and easy go and easy to forget
You never take responsibility
Don't you know that part of you is a part of me?

Never Surrender
It's easier said than done
But you got to finish what's already begun
Never, that's forever, seems like such a long time
But I only got one life to live--it's gonna be mine

Never Surrender
We cannot be denied
Never Surrender
Spread your wings and fly

(from the album "Never Surrender" by Triumph)

Fantasy and the Unexplained

THESE DREAMS

(B. Taupin/M. Page)

Spare a little candle
Save some light for me
Figures up ahead
Moving in the trees
White skin in linen,
Perfume on my wrist
And the full moon that hangs over
These dreams in the mist

Darkness on the edge
Shadows where I stand
I search for the time
On a watch with no hands
I want to see you clearly
Come closer than this
But all I remember
Are the dreams in the mist

These dreams go on when I close my eyes
Every second of the night I live another life
These dreams that sleep when it's cold outside
Every moment I'm awake the further I'm away

Is it cloak and dagger
Could it be spring or fall
I walk without a cut
Through a stained glass wall
Weaker in my eyesight
The candle in my grip
And words that have no form
Are falling from my lips

There's something out there
I can't resist
I need to hide away from the pain
There's something out there
I can't resist

The sweetest song is silence
That I've ever heard
Funny how your feet in dreams
Never touch the earth
In a wood full of princes
Freedom is a kiss
But the prince hides his face
From dreams in the mist
(from the album "Heart" by Heart)

HOTEL CALIFORNIA

(D. Felder/D. Henley/G/ Frey)

On a dark desert highway, cool wind in my hair
One smell that could lead us rose up through the air.
Up ahead in the distance, saw a shimmering light
My legs grew heavy and my sight grew dim
Had to stop for the night

There she stood in the doorway; I heard the mission bell
I was thinking to myself--this could be heaven or this could be
hell
The she lit up a candle, she showed me the way
There were voices down the corridor
Thought I heard them say--

"Welcome to the Hotel California, such a lovely place
There's plenty of room at the Hotel California
Anytime of year, you can find it here"

Her mind was definitely twisted, she got a Mercedes Benz
She got a lot of pretty boys she calls friends
How they danced in the courtyard, sweet summer sweat
Some dance to remember, some dance to forget

So I called up the captain--"Please bring me some wine"
"We haven't had that spirit here since 1969!"
And still those voices are calling from far away
Wake you up in the middle of the night
Just to her them say--

"Welcome to the Hotel California, what a lovely place,
Living it up at the Hotel California
What a nice surprise, bring your alibis"

Mirrors on the ceiling, pink champagne on ice
(And she said) "We are all just prisoners here of our own
device"
In the master's chamber, we gathered for the feast
They stabbed it with their steely knives
But they just can't kill the beast

Last thing I remember I was running for the door,
Went to find the passage back to the place I was before
"Relax" said the nightman, "We are programmed to receive. You
can check out anytime you like but you can never leave"

(from the album "Hotel California" by The Eagles)

General Topics

If the objective of a particular writing assignment is not related to specific literary themes, but to contemporary issues, the material contained in the following section may be useful. As the Model Curriculum Standards suggest, the student must "confront the major social and political issues, thus acquiring a common body of knowledge embedded in literature."²⁷ Representative activities that exemplify this standard are considered to be the examination of issues such as the corrupting effects of power, the effects of war, and the struggle between conscience and society.²⁸

Below is a limited list of topics that merit examination in a study of contemporary issues but were not applicable to the thematic units in the previous section. The teacher should follow the procedures outlined on pages 18 and 19, paying particular attention to step number six.

| <u>Topic</u> | <u>Song</u> | <u>Artist</u> |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Child abuse | Hell Is For Children | Pat Benatar |
| Child abuse | Prayer For The Children | The Allies |
| Child abuse | Baby Doe | Steve Taylor |
| Pressure/high expectations | Ticking | Elton John |
| Pressure/high expectations | Evil Genius | Pat Benatar |
| Drug abuse (cocaine) | Snowblind | Styx |

General Topics, (continued)

| <u>Topic</u> | <u>Song</u> | <u>Artist</u> |
|--------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| Media abuses | Dirty Laundry | Don Henley |
| Media abuses | Heart In The Right Place | Elton John |
| Education | Johnny Can't Read | Don Henley |

HELL IS FOR CHILDREN

(N. Geraldo/P. Benatar)

They cry in the dark
So you can't see their tears
They hide in the light
So you can't see their fears

Love and pain become one in the same
In the eyes of a wounded child
Because hell, hell is for children
And you know that their little lives
Can become such a mess
Hell, hell is for children
And you shouldn't pay for your love
With your bones and your flesh

It's subtle confusing, this brutal abusing
They blacken their eyes and then apologize
"Be daddy's good girl and don't tell Mommy a thing",
"Be a good little boy and you get a new toy,
Tell grandma you fell off the swing."

Because hell, hell is for children
And you know that their little lives
Can become such a mess
Hell, hell is for children
And you shouldn't pay for your love
With your bones and your flesh

Hell is for children...

(from the album "Crimes of Passion" by Pat Benatar)

PRAYER FOR THE CHILDREN

(S. Scott/M. Hodge)

I see the children on the T.V.
Asking, "Have you seen me?"
More little faces everyday
They don't go away

Torn from their world and out on their own
You can hear them calling
Taken from home into the unknown
So lost and alone

Hear our voice
Hear our cry
Say a prayer for the children
Heal the pain, heal our world
Say a prayer for the children

Suffering hearts bear all the pain
While the world is watching
The innocent die and nothing is changed
It's always the same

We pray for the children
Their voices are crying
The hurt and the pain is too much
For a small heart to bear

We don't hold the answers
We can't find the reasons
My God can you hear us
Please let us know that You're there

Hear our voice
Hear our cry
Say a prayer for the children
Heal the pain, heal the world
Say a prayer for the children

(from the album "Virtues" by The Allies)

BABY DOE
(S. Taylor)

Unfolding today
A miracle play this Indian morn
The father--he sighs
She opens her eyes
Their baby boy is born

"We don't understand,
He's not like we planned"
The doctor shakes his head
"Abnormal" they cry
And so they decide
This child is better dead

I bear the blame
Believers are few
And what am I do do?
I share the blame
The cradle's below
And where is Baby Doe?

A hearing is sought
The lawyers are bought
The court won't let him eat
The papers applaud
When judges play God
This child is getting weak

They're drawing a beed
Reciting their creed
"Respect a woman's choice"
I've heard that before
How can you ignore
This baby has a voice

I bear the blame
Believers are few
And what am I to do?
I share the blame
The cradle's below
And where is Baby Doe?

It's over and done
The presses have run
Some call the parents brave
Behind your disguise your rhetoric lies
You watched a baby starve
(from the album "Meltdown" by Steve Taylor)

EVIL GENIUS

(N. Geraldo/P. Benatar)

They were so ecstatic when the letter arrived
A certified genius at the age of five
They planned his future so carefully
He was everything they hope he'd be

He was a model child, a devoted son
Loved and admired by everyone
He played out every role -- a "T.V. hero"
He lived his life in a video fantasy

He was good at school, never failed a grade
They gave him hopes and dreams
And taught him not to hate
He had rules he learned to break for fun
Now he's hidin', 'cause his fingerprint's on the gun

Why'd ya have to do it, Evil Genius?
Was it justified in your mind
Why'd ya put us through it, Evil Genius?
Was it justified in your mind, anytime
You held a grudge?

Was it something said that pushed you over the line?
Your best interests were in our minds
You kept it so well hidden, we never knew
No one ever expected anything like this from you

(from the album "Precious Time" by Pat Benatar)

TICKING

(E. John/B. Taupin)

"An extremely quiet child" they called you in your school report
"He has always taken interest in the subjects that he's taught"
So what was it that brought the squad car screaming up your drive
To notify your parents of the manner in which you died?

At St. Patrick's every Sunday, Father Fletcher heard your sins
"Oh he's unconcerned with competition, he never cares to win"
But blood stained a young hand that never held a gun
And his parents never thought of him as their troubled son

"Now you'll never get to heaven" Mama said
Remember Mama said
TICKING, TICKING
"Grow up straight and true blue,
Run along to bed"
Hear it, Hear it?
TICKING, TICKING

They had you holed up in a downtown bar screaming for a priest
Some gook said "His brain's just snapped" then someone called the
police
You'd knifed a Negro waiter who had tried to calm you down
Oh, you pulled a gun and told them all to lay still on the ground

Promising to hurt no one, providing they were still
A young man tried to make a break, with tear-filled eyes you
killed
That gun butt felt so smooth and warm cradled in your palm
Oh, your childhood cried out in your head, "They mean to do you
harm"

"Don't ever ride on the devil's knee" Mama said
TICKING, TICKING
"Pay your penance well my child
Fear where angels tread"
Hear it, hear it?
TICKING, TICKING

Within an hour the news had reached the media machine
"A male caucasian with a gun had gone berserk in Queens"
The area had been sealed off, the kids sent home from school
Fourteen people lying dead in a bar they called the Kicking Mule

(continued)

Oh, they pleaded to your sanity for the sake of those inside
"Throw out your gun, walk out slow, just keep your hands held
high"
But they pumped you full of rifle shells as you walked out the
door
Oh, you danced in death like a marionette on the vengence of the
law

"You've slept too long in silence" Mama said
Remember Mama said
TICKING, TICKING
"Crazy boy you'll only wind up with strange notions in your head"
Hear it, hear it?
TICKING, TICKING

(from the album "Caribou" by Elton John)

SNOWBLIND

(J. Young)

Mirror, mirror on the wall
The face you show me
Scares me so
I thought that I could
Call your bluff
But now the lines are clear enough
Life's not pretty, even though
I try so hard to make it so
Mornings are such cold distress
How did I ever get into this mess?

I'm snowblind, can't live without you
'Cause you're so fine, I can't get away
I'm snowblind, snowblind, snowblind

Harmless and innocent
You devil in white
You stole my will
Without a fight
You filled me with confidence
But you blinded my eyes
You tricked me with visions of paradise

Now I realize that I'm snowblind
Can't live without you
'Cause you're so fine, I can't get away
Yes I'm snowblind, snowblind, snowblind

Mirror, mirror I confess
I can't escape the emptiness
No more reasons to pretend
Here comes that same old feeling again

I'm snowblind, can't live without you
'Cause you're so fine, I can't get away
Won't you throw me a lifeline
I'm going down for the third time
'Cause I'm snowblind and I can't get away

(from the album "Paradise Theater" by Styx)

DIRTY LAUNDRY

(D. Henley/D. Korchmar)

"I make a living off the Evening News
Just give me something--something I can use
People love it when you lose,
They love dirty laundry

Well, I coulda been an actor, but I wound up here
I just have to look good, I don't have to be clear
Come and whisper in my ear
Give us dirty laundry"

Kick 'em when they're up
Kick 'em when they're down
Kick 'em when they're up
Kick 'em when they're down
Kick 'em when they're up
Kick 'em all around

"We got the bubble-headed bleach blonde
Who comes on at five
She can tell you about the plane crash
With a gleam in her eye
It's interesting when people die--
Give us dirty laundry

Can we film the operation?
Is the head dead yet?
You know the boys in the newsroom got a running bet
Get the widow on the set!
We need dirty laundry

You don't really need to find out
What's going on
You don't really need to know
Just how far it's gone
Just leave well enough alone
Eat your dirty laundry

Dirty little secrets
Dirty little lies
We got our dirty little fingers in everybody's pie
We love to cut you down to size
We love dirty laundry

We can do the innuendo
We can dance and sing
When it's said and done we haven't told you a thing
We all know that crap is king
Give us dirty laundry!"

(from the album "I Can't Stand Still" by Don Henley)

HEART IN THE RIGHT PLACE

(E. John/G. Osborne)

I've got a good by-line
They all know my name
The queen of the sly line
I feed on your fame
I got my heart in the right place
It's all in the game

If you're doin' fine boy
You got my vote
But step out of line boy
And I'll go for your throat
'Cause I got my heart in the right place
So give me a quote

I'll ask you some question
I'll tell you some lies
You'll open your heart
Like a friend
I'll make up some answers
You won't recognize
The "you" I create with a pen

But my heart's in the right place
Now and again
Heart's in the right place
Know what I mean?
My heart's in the right place
On page seventeen

I'll ask you some questions
Tell you some lies
You won't understand
But you will
I'll make up some answers
Cut you down to size
Then I move in for the kill

Oh but my heart's in the right place
My heart's in the right place
My heart's in the right place
It's part of the skill!

(from the album "The Fox" by Elton John)

JOHNNY CAN'T READ
(D. Henley/D. Kortchmar)

Football, baseball, basketball games
Drinkin' beer, kickin' ass and takin' down names
Top down, get-a-round, shootin' the line
Summer is here and Johnny's feelin' fine

But Johnny can't read
Summer is over and he's gone to seed
Johnny can't read
He never learned nothin' that he'll ever need

Well, Johnny can dance and Johnny can love
Johnny can push and Johnny can shove
Johnny can hang out; Johnny can talk tough
Johnny can get down and Johnny can throw up--

But Johnny can't read
Summer is over and he's gone to seed
You know that Johnny can't read?
He never learned nothin' that he'll ever need

Well, it it Teacher's fault, oh no
Is it Mommie's fault, oh no
It is Society's fault, oh no
Well, is it Johnny's fault, OH NO!

Couple years later Johnny's on the run
Johnny got confused and he bought himself a gun
Well he went and did something that he shouldn't oughta done--
F.B.I. on his tail--"Use a Gun, Go to Jail"

Johnny can dance and Johnny can love
Johnny can push and Johnny can shove
Johnny can pinball; Johnny can talk tough
Johnny can get down and Johnny can throw up

Well recess is over!
Recess is over!

Sit coms, "T&A"
Johnny's mind is blown away
Cop shows, horror flicks
Johnny's brain is full of it

But Johnny can't read

(from the album "I Can't Stand Still" by Don Henley)

Notes

1. Ernest L. Boyer High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America (The Carnegie Foundation) New York: Harper and Row, 1983 p. 66
2. James Britton "The Composing Processes and the Functions of Writing" Research on Composing (NCTE) 1978, p. 13
3. See Grammar and Composition (Prentice Hall) or Process and Thought in Composition (Winthrop, Inc.)
4. California State Board of Education Model Curriculum Standards (Sacramento: California State Department of Education) 1985, p. E-14, E-17
5. Edith M. Sonnenburg Pre-writing Rhetorical Strategies Which Activate Both Hemispheres of the Brain, Master's thesis, California State University of San Bernardino, March, 1985, p. 17.
6. Sonnenburg, p. 18-19
7. Sonnenburg, p. 2
8. James Moffett and Betty Jane Wagner Student-Centered Language Arts and Reading, K-13: A Handbook for Teachers (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1985) p. 308
9. Moffett and Wagner, p. 188
10. Moffett and Wagner, p. 189
11. California State Board of Education, p. E-13
12. Sonnenburg, p. 48
13. Byron Massialas and Benjamin Cox Inquiry in Social Studies (New York: McGraw Hill) 1966, p. 12
14. Gary Tate Teaching High School Composition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970) p. v
15. Alan D. Englesman "A Writing Program that Teaches Writing" English Journal, LVI (March 1967) p. 417

16. Robert Keith Miller "The Use of Literature in English Composition" English Journal (December 1980) p. 55
17. California State Board of Education, p. E-2
18. Stephen Carter "The Beatles and Freshman English" College Composition and Communication (October 1969) p. 228
19. Carter, p. 228
20. Jim Bencivenga "Tightening the Agenda for U.S. Schools" Education 86/87 (Connecticut: Dushkin Publishing Group) 1986 p. 12
21. Samuel J. Rogal Teaching Composition in the Senior High School (New Jersey: Littlefield, Adams & Co., 1966) p. 46
22. Jesse Hise "In Defense of Popular Culture in the Classroom" English Journal (September 1972) p. 905
23. Rogal, p. 44
24. John C. Gerber "Suggestions for the Commonsense Reform of the English Curriculum" College Composition and Communication (December 1977) p. 313
25. California State Board of Education, p. E-27
26. California State Board of Education, p. E-36
27. California State Board of Education, p. E-4
28. California State Board of Education, p. E-4

Bibliography

Boyer, Ernest L. High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America (the Carnegie Foundation) New York: Harper and Row 1983

Provides an overview of the goals and objectives prescribed by the Carnegie Foundation for the advancement of teaching.

California State Board of Education Model Curriculum Standards (Sacramento: California State Department of Education) 1985

Presents the objective of a literature-based English curriculum as well as an extensive list of both core and suggested readings.

Carter, Stephan "The Beatles and Freshman English" College Composition and Communication (Oct. 1969)

Defends the use of contemporary literature and popular media to teach writing.

Englesman, Alan D. "A Writing Program that Teaches Writing" English Journal, LVI (March 1967)

Treats the issue of writing courses being overrun with literature and provides possible lessons in the teaching of writing.

Gerber, John C. "Suggestions for the Commonsense Reform of English Curriculum" College Composition and Communication (December 1977)

Suggests alternatives to literature in the writing classroom.

Hise, Jesse "In Defense of Popular Culture in the Classroom" English Journal (September 1972)

Considers the possible uses of music, film and television in the English classroom.

Horner, Winifred Bryan Composition and Literature - Bridging the Gap Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983

Presents numerous articles dealing with how literature can contribute to the composition class.

Massialas, Byron and Cox, Benjamin Inquiry in Social Studies
(New York: McGraw Hill) 1966

Examines the role of inquiry in education and its use as a method of discovery in the social studies classroom.

McNeil, John D. Curriculum: A Comprehensive Introduction
Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1985

Gives an overview of philosophical views of the English curriculum.

Miller, Robert Keith "The Use of Literature in English Composition" English Journal (December 1980)

Defends the use of literature as a source for theme topics

Moffett, James and Wagner, Betty Jane Student-Centered Language Arts and Reading; K-13: A Handbook for Teachers Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1983

A comprehensive text for teachers of language arts/English dealing with virtually all phases of the curriculum.

Murray, Donald Write to Learn New York: Holt, Rinehard and Winston, 1984

Treats writing as a learning endeavor and discusses the writing process.

Rogal, Samuel J. Teaching Composition in the Senior High School New Jersey: Littlefield, Adams & Co., 1966

A teacher preparation text on approaches to expository writing.

Sonnenburg, Edith M. Pre-writing Rhetorical Strategies which Activate Both Hemispheres of the Brain Master's Thesis, California State University San Bernardino, March 1985

Provides numerous pre-writing strategies as well as a summary of literature regarding brain research.

Tate, Gary Teaching High School Composition New York: Oxford University Press, 1970

An extensive treatment of composition from many various perspectives.