


1981

# Teaching ESL Through American Songs: A Sourcebook

Julia Ann Somers

*School for International Training*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/ipp\\_collection](https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/ipp_collection)

 Part of the [Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education Commons](#), [Linguistics Commons](#), and the [Teacher Education and Professional Development Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Somers, Julia Ann, "Teaching ESL Through American Songs: A Sourcebook" (1981). *MA TESOL Collection*. 321.  
[https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/ipp\\_collection/321](https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/ipp_collection/321)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the SIT Graduate Institute at SIT Digital Collections. It has been accepted for inclusion in MA TESOL Collection by an authorized administrator of SIT Digital Collections. For more information, please contact [digitalcollections@sit.edu](mailto:digitalcollections@sit.edu).

Teaching ESL Through American Songs:

A Sourcebook

Julia Ann Somers

B.A. University of Pennsylvania 1978

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the Master of Arts in Teaching degree at the  
School for International Training, Brattleboro, Vermont.

October 1981

September 1981

DONALD B. WATT LIBRARY  
School For International Training  
Kipling Road  
Brattleboro, VT 05301

This project by Julia Ann Somers is accepted in its present form.

Date Oct 5, 1981 Principal Adviser Alan Silver

Project Adviser/Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
School of Industrial Engineering  
Kilgus Hall  
Berkeley, CA 94720

## CONTENTS

II.	Rationale.....	1
III.	Illustration - Two Songs.....	4
	A. "I Will".....	4
	B. "The Donkey Song".....	7
III.	Activities.....	11
	A. Paraphrase the Song.....	11
	B. Focus On.....	12
	C. Introduction or Reinforcement of a Grammar Point.....	13
	D. Comprehension Questions.....	14
	E. Cloze Exercise.....	15
	F. Dictation.....	15
	G. Translation.....	16
	H. Correction of Song Lyrics.....	17
	I. Pronunciation Practice.....	18
	J. Singing.....	19
	K. Discussion.....	19
IV.	Appendixes	
	A. Practical Considerations.....	22
	B. Songs Annotated for Use in the ESL Classroom.....	25
	1. Song List.....	26
	2. Key to Abbreviations.....	27
	3. Songs.....	28
	C. Further Sources.....	54

## I. RATIONALE

One objective of a language teacher, in the simplest terms, is to facilitate the students' making and internalizing the connections between the patterns of signals or forms which comprise a language and the meaning those patterns represent. To achieve this, the teacher must first draw the students' attention to the connection between meaning and form, and then help him internalize it, i.e. remember it and be able to draw on it again as needed to express his ideas in the language.

A way to do this is by providing some experience that the student can associate with that connection. If the student makes the connection in a way that is pleasant, memorable, or personally important to him, involving him emotionally as well as intellectually, then the connection means something to him and he is better able to retain it.

In my own language learning and teaching experiences, I have found the use of songs of the target language to be an effective tool for this on both the affective and pedagogical level, because of their appeal to the emotions and imagination, and for their cultural and linguistic richness.

Affectively, songs spark the student's imagination, curiosity, and sense of enjoyment through the use of music and poetry. Additionally, by having the students work and perhaps sing together, a song activity can create a feeling of camaraderie and unity among the students, and a feeling of having touched and mastered a piece of the target culture.

Pedagogically, songs are a rich and versatile resource. They can be brought into the classroom for diversionary relief as a sample of "real" English, or they can be used to illustrate a point. They can also be explored in greater depth, and are, in fact, particularly suitable for integrative activities involving several language areas at once, including grammar, vocabulary, culture, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. There are a wide range of activities which are suited to one or several of these language areas, and these activities are eminently adaptable to students' special needs and interests.

You, the teacher, must consider these needs and interests, and the abilities of your students, not only in determining the kinds of exercises you present them with, but also the choice of the song, itself. Fast songs are often more fun and more challenging than slow ones, but may be too difficult for beginners. Intermediate and advanced classes tend to respond well to a challenge, while a beginning class should not be frustrated by language which is far beyond their ability to understand.

For beginners, songs with a minimum of non-standard, complicated, or unusual usages are best. Intermediate and advanced students can deal with lyrics which contain more slang or are technically incorrect.

It is not necessary, however, to present beginners with songs exhibiting only language which has already been covered in class. It is beneficial for students to gain familiarity with new structures so that these points will be recognizable

to them and thereby less formidable when formally addressed in future lessons.

The following discussion concerning the use of songs in the ESL classroom consists of two parts: (1) description of how two songs were successfully adapted to the demands of different ESL situations, and (2) specific suggestions for possible activities using songs. In addition, three appendices are attached: (A) a discussion of some of the practical considerations involved in the use of music in the classroom, (B) the lyrics of 20 songs of various types, each analyzed for use as an ESL teaching tool, and (C) a bibliography of sources for additional ideas and music.

## II. ILLUSTRATION - TWO SONGS

### INTRODUCTION

In choosing songs for a particular class, the teacher must consider what her students can do, in what ways they can benefit from the song, and what kinds of exercises are best suited to those considerations. By judicious choice of song and activity, a language teacher can present her class with a language learning tool specifically tailored to its own level and needs, as I shall demonstrate by discussing the adaptation of two songs to different ESL situations.

#### A. "I Will"

In what follows, I am primarily interested in describing briefly some of the various ways that my students and I were able to use the Beatles' song "I Will", from their White Album. I like to work with "I Will" because of its accessibility for beginning students, and because of its appeal as a Beatles song. I find it most valuable for its use of the future tense and expressions of time, and secondarily for other language considerations which are detailed on page 42.

#### I Will

Who knows how long I've loved you?  
 You know I love you still.  
 Will I wait a lonely lifetime?  
 If you want me to, I will.

For if I ever saw you  
 I didn't catch your name,  
 But it never really mattered;  
 I will always feel the same.

Love you forever and forever,  
 Love you with all my heart.  
 Love you whenever we're together,  
 Love you when we're apart.



And when at last I find you,  
 Your song will fill the air.  
 Sing it loud so I can hear you.  
 Make it easy to be near you,  
 For the things you do endear you to me.  
 Ah, you know I will. I will. . . .

I have used variations of the following procedure for "I Will" in three different classes of advanced beginners. Two were classes of high-school age or young adult Mexican students, and the third was a small class of one Iranian and two Japanese adults. In addition to the grammar, I was particularly interested in exposing these students to "real English" as opposed to textbook English, as well as to the rhymes and spellings, and the rhythms of English.

1. "Today we have a song by the Beatles. Who were they?" Discuss the importance of the Beatles phenomenon in American culture and around the world.
2. "The song is called 'I Will'." Write the title on the board, and explain briefly, or elicit from the students, that will + present participle = future.
3. Play the song through twice. After the first play-through, ask for a paraphrase of it. Let them listen again, with a copy of the lyrics.
4. Let them look over the lyrics and discuss anything they have questions about. Draw their attention to points you want to make sure they are aware of, including use of "will". Elicit explanations from the class, or give quick, efficient explanations yourself - not detailed analyses.
5. Discussion - Who is speaking? What is he saying? What kind of song is this? How is the speaker feeling? What is the story behind the song?
6. Have the students identify the rhymes in the song. Work on spellings and pronunciation.
7. Have the students repeat the words of the song after you, line by line. Work on pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm.
9. Dictation - Play the song through twice, pausing after every line, while the students write.

10. Move on to some other activity using the new material. For example: Have students in diads write and perform dialogues using the "will" form of the future and the new vocabulary.

This procedure incorporates work on the mechanical and secondarily the creative skills of speaking, listening skills, and grammar. It is difficult, and probably not necessary, to design an exercise which works only on one skill. In this procedure, students also worked on their vocabulary, writing, reading, and understanding of culture.

The procedure described is flexible, of course. You may wish to implement only one part of it, or spend more time on one section than on others. In the class with the Japanese students, for example, we got involved in a discussion about Paul McCartney's arrest by Japanese authorities on smuggling charges. This class also found great value in the pronunciation work of Step 7, and wanted to spend a lot of time on that. On the other hand, they were reluctant to sing aloud in class, so I did not insist, though I wonder if they might have overcome this shyness in a language lab situation. Conversely, the two Mexican classes insisted on singing the song through several times.

One ESL class I know of, on the spur of the moment, decided to organize and perform a "rock concert" of several songs they had worked on in class - thereby acquiring vocabulary such as lead singer, back-up vocals, percussion, bass, ticket office, and hit single.

There are a wide variety of spin-off activities such as the one above, or the one described in Step 10. Alternatively,

you might assign homework based on the song, such as language lab work, translation, or an essay based on a discussion topic. Individual songs lend themselves to different activities, and of course the activities you choose should be determined by an assessment of your class's needs and abilities.

#### B. "The Donkey Song"

The song and procedure I will describe below indicate one way the presentation of a song can be tailored to the unique needs and talents of a specific teacher and class. This is a song from my own elementary school days which I got a lot of mileage out of in my Mexican classes of young beginners. I don't know the original source or title, but I call it the "The Donkey Song".

Sweetly sings the donkey  
At the break of day.  
If you listen to him  
This is what he'll say--

Hee-haw! Hee-haw!  
Hee-haw, hee-haw, hee-haw!

The procedure, as I performed and will describe it, takes into account the following specifics of the situation: a large class of rambunctious but responsive eleven year old beginners in need of pronunciation practice, particularly with the letter "H", which is silent in their native language. Though they responded well to rapid-fire challenge, a standard drill would not keep their attention for long. This procedure also accommodated my own talent for quick, cartoon-like sketches.

1. First I wrote the letter "H" on the board and sought identification from the class.

2. I added an "e" to make it "He", a word they recognized, and had the students pronounce it, heavily stressing the "H" sound.
3. I made it "Hee-haw", and established the pronunciation of that.
4. I asked them to identify that, and at the same time, quickly drew a sketch of a donkey on the board and encircled "Hee-haw" in a balloon coming from the donkey's mouth.
5. We identified the donkey as "donkey". I added musical notes around "Hee-haw" and asked the students what the donkey was doing - singing.
6. I wrote up the first two lines of the song. I translated "sweetly" for them, and "break of day", drawing a sunrise behind the donkey.
7. I sang the first line and they repeated it, a couple of times. I sang the second and they repeated it, a couple of times. We sang the first two lines together. Then we worked a little on pronunciation and intonation, and sang both lines through again.
8. I put up the second two lines and repeated the procedure.
9. We sang through all four lines - I giving it first, and the class singing after me. When we finished "This is what he'll say--" I pointed to the balloon and shouted "hee-haw!", emphasizing the "H" sound. They shouted back "hee-haw!". We did that four more times to finish the song. I subsequently added the five "hee-haws" to the board to complete the last two lines of the song, and we went through the whole song again.
10. This next part is optional, and if peace and quiet is a priority in your classroom, you may wish to skip it. I divided the class in half, trying to distribute the loud students evenly. First I asked one half to sing the song loudly. When they finished, I shrugged and asked the second half if they could sing more loudly than the first. They gave it their best. I alternated a few more times and finished by having them all sing together again.

This song is best done as an end to the class period because by the time the students are done, they are too full of energy to sit still for anything else. My class loved "The Donkey Song", and requested frequently to sing it. Once

they are familiar with the song, you may want to ask a student to lead the singing. My students enjoyed taking turns doing this.

I introduced the donkey character into several spin-off activities and subsequent lessons on such topics as parts of the body, the farm-yard, possessives, numbers, and prepositions. At the end of such lessons, I usually left five to ten minutes for singing.

I found the "Donkey Song" activity valuable in several areas. The song itself offers ways to work on intonation, rhythm, and pronunciation, particularly of that difficult "H" sound. Vocabulary is enriched through the song and through spin-off activities. Reading was involved as the students followed the words written on the blackboard. Speaking was further exercised by encouraging volume, countering the children's tendency to mumble.

These were very beginning students, so I did not get involved in the grammar of the lines, (except to demonstrate briefly the contraction in line 4), but rather, worked at conveying the general meaning. For a class that was more advanced, I could have:

- discussed the inverted syntax of the first line,
- gotten into expressions for different times of day in line 2,
- reviewed object pronouns in line 3, or the use of "will" in line 4,
- had the students copy down the words for writing practice,
- erased the lyrics from the board and given it as a dictation, or
- worked on spelling by drawing attention to the "day-say" rhyme, and elicited other words they knew having the same sound, starting with "break" in line 2.

By being aware of the students' needs, abilities, and interests, and the variety of possibilities inherent in using songs as a language resource, a teacher can design an effective lesson integrating a range of language skills.

### III. ACTIVITIES

#### INTRODUCTION

Teaching style is very much unique to the individual teacher. One important consideration which contributes to my own teaching style is the sense that it is necessary to work at maintaining student involvement in the lesson. This is, in fact, a prime reason for my interest in using songs as teaching tools, and is a concern which I find applicable at all levels of conducting a lesson. Thus, when a language question arises, whether it be the definition of a vocabulary word or the elucidation of a grammar point, I seek explanation from the class before I will give the answer myself. Likewise, I encourage students' active involvement by avoiding "yes/no" questions in favor of "wh" questions, which require a thoughtful response.

Such strategies as these, which reflect my own teaching style, are unavoidably a part of the activities which I describe below, because I have described them as I would use them. Every teacher has her own classroom style, however, so I suggest the activities to you only as ideas worth consideration. They are not to be regarded as delicate recipes. Feel free, even obligated, to amend the following activities to suit your own style and the needs of your students.

#### A. PARAPHRASE THE SONG

FOCUS: Listening comprehension, speaking.

Play the tape two or three times, depending on the difficulty of the song and on the level of your class. Have

the students listen closely. After each play-through, have the class tell you (or each other in small groups if the class is large) what the song was about. They should be able to understand more of it each time they hear it. If this is difficult, try playing it line by line, letting them paraphrase a little at a time. Students can also do this exercise in a language lab, working on their own to produce a three or four sentence written paraphrase.

#### B. FOCUS ON. . . .

FOCUS: Reading

Present the lyrics and play the song. Have the students read the lyrics of the song, underlining (or, if they don't have their own copies of the lyrics, noting down) all of whatever it is you have asked them to look for - e.g. all the words having a particular sound, all the rhyming words, all the words they are not sure of, all the words referring to geographical locations, all the antonyms, all the metaphors, all the adjectives, and so on. Review the answers together in class.

Where sounds are concerned, you may want to let them listen to the song again as they do this activity. This is a good way to make the connection between sound and spelling, and work with the Silent Way Fidel Charts might be a useful adjunct to this kind of exercise.



### C. INTRODUCTION OR REINFORCEMENT OF A GRAMMAR POINT

FOCUS: Grammar

This is not a way to "teach" grammar, per se, but rather, a way to show students in what form a certain meaning can be achieved in English. The intent is for the students to understand the overall meaning of the song and then see how this meaning is expressed through a particular convention of structure.

Look for a song which features repetition of the focal structure or contrasts it with another structure already familiar to the students.

Present the lyrics and play the song. Give students time to look over the lyrics and have them underline things they are not sure of. Field questions by giving quick efficient explanations, or elicit explanations from the class. If the new point is not mentioned, draw students' attention to it, explaining it and giving other examples of how it might be used, to make its significance clear, and possibly have the students try to come up with some examples. Have the students paraphrase the song; in doing so, they must deal with the role of the new point in determining the song's meaning.

At this stage, you can continue to use the song in other ways if you wish, but you ought to follow up subsequently by giving students an opportunity to work on and practice the new grammar point.

## D. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

### 1. Listening Comprehension Questions

FOCUS: Listening, writing or speaking.

The questions you ask will depend on what you want the students to listen for. For example, you can ask "wh" questions that hinge on understanding of the story or message or the motivations of the speaker, vocabulary or expressions, the grammar, or similar sounding words.

This exercise can be done as language lab homework so that the student can replay the song as much as he needs to, and then write out the answers to the questions you have provided (no more than four or five) in short essay form.

This exercise can also be done in class where the number of times the song can be played is limited, and therefore tests listening skills more stringently. Play the song once, then present the questions for the students to look over and think about. Then play the song through twice more. In class you have the option of having the students answer orally, possibly working also on discussion skills, or in writing as in the language lab.

### 2. Reading Comprehension Questions

FOCUS: Reading, writing or speaking.

Let the students listen to the song once. Then present them with a copy of the lyrics and questions based on the lyrics. As in the listening comprehension exercise, answers can be written out or given orally.

## E. CLOZE EXERCISE

FOCUS: Listening, vocabulary, reading, writing.

Like the previous activities, this exercise can be done either in the classroom or in the lab.

Pass out copies of the lyrics from which you have deleted selected words. In the lab the students can play through the song as often as they like, to fill in the blanks. In the classroom, play the song through twice while the students work on filling in the blanks. Then read through the song line by line with the class, having them provide the deleted words and spellings. Play through the song once more.

The cloze exercise can be used for many purposes. You can have students listen for particular parts of speech, such as verbs or prepositions, for example. This exercise also is excellent for discerning specific sounds, minimal pairs, homonyms, reductions, and other listening and spelling problems.

You can even write your own lyrics to a simple tune (gospel and traditional songs are good for this) and in this way isolate specific difficulties, such as the l/r or v/b distinction, in your choice of words.

## F. DICTATION

FOCUS: Listening comprehension, writing.

Depending on the level of the class and the difficulty of the song, you may want to let the class listen to the song once or twice first, and ask questions or talk about what the song says. Beginning students may nevertheless find this exercise difficult.

Play the song twice, pausing after each line to give the students time to write, and play the song through a third time while they look over what they have written. If the student is working on his own in the lab, of course, he can listen to the tape as often as he likes.

Have the class collaborate on a correct version on the blackboard, or if time is short, pass out copies of the lyrics for them to compare with their own work. Let them listen to the song again while reading the words, to reinforce what they are hearing.

Optionally, if the students are still with you, you can play the song again as a dictation. The students should find that they recognize more of what they are hearing this time.

#### G. TRANSLATION

**FOCUS:** Reading, writing, grammar and syntax, dictionary skills, vocabulary.

For homework or as an in-class exercise, have the students write out a translation of the lyrics in their own language. You may want to help out beforehand with difficult-to-translate items, or you may want to let them work these out for themselves. The kind of song you choose will determine whether the challenge lies in grammar, syntax, or vocabulary (including two-word verbs, idioms, and slang).

This exercise is most useful if you are familiar with your students' native language(s), so that you can check their work and clear up difficulties. Alternatively, however, if your class is mixed in nationalities and two or more speakers of each language group are represented, same-language speakers can

compare translations. If all members of the class speak the same native language, they can collaborate on a correct version on the blackboard.

In an activity such as this the teacher should make clear that only the song translation is in the native tongue - all discussion should be confined to English.

#### H. CORRECTION OF SONG LYRICS

FOCUS: Reading, writing, grammar, culture.

Many songs are written in a way which deviates from conventional textbook English, for various reasons. In the interests of poetic expression we may find, among other things, the twisting of syntax or the coining of new words. The lyrics of many songs are written in the normal street language of some ethnic or regional sub-group of the population, as in the opera "Porgy and Bess", country-western music, or reggae. Students are likely to be familiar with similar phenomena in their own native languages.

Pass out copies of the selected song and let the students listen to it as they read through the words, then ask them if all the English in the song is correct. When they have come up with a few examples and explained why these are incorrect and how they would be written correctly, ask the students if they can suggest reasons why the song was written this way. Have beginning students try to identify the effect of the "errors" in terms of rhyme and rhythm. Intermediate and advanced students can also address the issues of tone and popular speech. Give the students time in class to go through

and put into standard English the rest of the "errors" in the song, or assign this as homework. Then, as a check, have the students collaborate on a corrected version on the blackboard.

## I. PRONUNCIATION PRACTICE

FOCUS: Listening, speaking, reading.

1. In the Language Lab - Students can work at their own pace, and in some privacy should they be self-conscious.

Prepare a master tape on which the entire song is played through once, and then is played again, a phrase at a time, with a lengthy enough pause after each phrase that the student can tape his own voice. Instruct the student to listen carefully to each phrase and then either sing or, if he prefers, chant it, replicating the sounds he has heard as closely as he can, following a copy of the lyrics at the same time so that he will be aware of what he is hearing and reproducing. When he has finished he should play back what he has taped, comparing the singer's pronunciation with his own.

If you are concerned that normal intonation differs to a confusing degree from sung intonation in English, you may want to try a variation of this practice, which is to record the words of the song yourself, phrase by phrase, using normal speaking expression, for the student to replicate.

### 2. In Class

Present a copy of the song and play the tape while students follow along. Read through the lyrics aloud phrase by phrase, having the students replicate your pronunciation, stress, and

intonation as closely as they can, both individually and in unison. Problem areas can be dealt with in whatever ways you generally find effective. You may want to consider the Silent Way Sound-Color Chart or Fidels, drumming out the stress patterns on a desk top, drawing a diagram of the mouth showing tongue position, or showing intonation patterns by lines on the blackboard.

#### J. SINGING

FOCUS: Reading, pronunciation.

Present a copy of the lyrics. Let the students hear the song while reading the lyrics silently, and then have them try to sing through it once with the tape. Have the students then note down any words or expressions they don't understand, and then go over the lyrics with them line by line, explaining briefly any puzzling vocabulary or grammar. Work on pronunciation by having the students repeat the lines after you. Sing through the whole song once or twice more.

#### K. DISCUSSION

FOCUS: Speaking, listening, culture.

Begin by presenting the lyrics and playing the song. Have the students read over the lyrics and make note of any items they are not sure of. Field questions. If you think the song might be a difficult one for the students, you could have them paraphrase it briefly to ascertain that it is understood. Open up discussion by asking questions which require thought and opinion.

In his interesting and thorough Independent Professional Project on topics which can be taught through American music in the ESL classroom, (Using Music to Teach English as a Second Language: A Guide to the Use of Song Lyrics.

(Brattleboro, VT: SIT. 1977), Peter M. Carney suggests that the following criteria be considered:

1. Universality, or applicability, so each student will be familiar with the topic being discussed.
2. Controversial quality, so students will, hopefully, forget their language inhibitions and fueled by interest and a personal knowledge of the subject, open up a lively discourse which the teacher can moderate or direct as need be.

He goes on to explain:

The different styles of American music carry with them different messages and attitudes. These messages and attitudes, with their differing value systems, can involve a class in a debate of how economic class and social class, educational background, and even regionality can affect and shape a person's view of himself and his world. . . . Since these are virtually universal subject areas, . . . they can be effectively employed as vehicles to encourage discussions.

While some songs, such as "The Donkey Song", don't lend themselves to much more than a paraphrase, others are a veritable goldmine of discussion possibilities. The Doobie Brothers' song, "Desperado", is rich in cultural allusions and attitudes on the subject of personal freedom and its implications.

An interesting way of promoting discussion, which Carney suggests, is to simultaneously present two songs which offer opposing views, such as a patriotic song along with an anti-war song, or James Taylor's "Traffic Jam" with one of the Beach Boys' hymns to four-wheeled status, such as "Little Deuce Coupé". Or, instigate a discussion of sex-role stereotyping by



reversing the "hes" and "shes" in a song. Then discuss the difference that makes, and why.

Following are several general areas for discussion. The appropriateness of a specific question for a given song will vary.

- Who is the author or performer? Is he famous? What do you know about him? Do you like him? Why or why not?

- What kind of song is this, e.g., love song, protest song, etc. What type of music is this, e.g., traditional, rock, disco, folk, jazz, etc. What do you know about the history of this type of music?

- What can you tell about the singer? What is he saying? How does he feel and why? Do you think he should feel this way? What kind of person do you think he is?

- What kind of humor, opinions, attitudes, or beliefs are represented here? How are they compatible with or different from your own?

#### IV. APPENDIX

##### A. PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In order to present a smoothly running language lesson using songs, it is important to consider several practical areas. You should give thought to your choice of music source, finding a recording of good sound quality, and deciding how you will present the lyrics of the song.

One item to consider in using song activities is how you will make music. If you or one of your students can play some instrument such as guitar or piano (assuming one is available) you have a marvelously flexible source of music and a good catalyst for class involvement.

If, however, neither your talents, as is my own case, nor those of your students, lie in that direction, you can bravely sing the song without accompaniment (though your students may choose not to follow your example), or you can bring the song to life via tape or record.

Using records has its drawbacks. A record player may not be readily available, and is likely to be heavy. In addition, record albums are awkward to carry, and are easily damaged. In class you may find it difficult to find and replay a line or phrase of a song on a record.

Cassette tape recorders, on the other hand, are often provided by language institutes for classroom use, and are easily portable and simple to use. You may find it worthwhile to invest in a good quality portable cassette recorder. I also use mine outside of class to listen to my own tape collection,

which serves as the source of most of the songs I use in the classroom.

Practical considerations also apply in choosing a song for your class to work with. You should give a thought not only to the lyrics and activity, but also to the recording itself. Consider whether the words are clearly enunciated and the record or tape recording is of good quality. An otherwise interesting exercise can be ruined if the recording sounds garbled or fuzzy. A test of this is to try transcribing the song yourself. If you have to replay a line several times to determine the words, it is certain to be unintelligible to your students.

What is the best way to present song lyrics to the class - brown paper, blackboard, or individual copies? The answer is that it depends. Certain merits of the blackboard are demonstrated in the "Donkey Song" procedure described earlier. Parts of the song can be brought before the students progressively. In addition, you may find it advantageous to be able to erase or replace words or lines quickly. The disadvantages of putting lyrics on the blackboard are that the writing is not permanent, and particularly with long songs, unless you have the opportunity to get into the classroom before the lesson period, you must waste valuable class time to write the lyrics and see to it in the meantime that the students are doing something constructive.

Passing out copies of the lyrics which have been xeroxed or mimeographed beforehand is an efficient answer, and it gives the students something to take away with them. However, it has two disadvantages. One is that when each student is looking down at his own paper, it breaks the united attention of the

class achieved by having all attention focused at the front. The other disadvantage is that students will not have the benefit of writing their own copies of the lyrics.

A third alternative, which I often find to be viable, is to copy the lyrics before class onto a length of brown wrapping paper or newsprint which can then be rolled up and carried into class to be tacked onto the wall when needed, and can be easily removed and rolled up to be used again.

## B. SONGS ANNOTATED FOR USE IN THE ESL CLASSROOM

## INTRODUCTION

The following section consists of twenty songs which lend themselves in various ways to the teaching of English. Included are notes for their use in such areas as vocabulary and expressions, grammar, pronunciation, cultural allusions, non-standard usages, and discussion topics. It is not intended that all points listed be covered in any one lesson, but rather that the points listed serve as a guide to some of the pedagogical possibilities of the songs.

My criteria for the selection of these particular songs was three-fold:

- As a whole, the collection offers a wide range of important language considerations.
- The songs are easily available on record or tape.
- These are songs that I find interesting and enjoy working with.

A variety of kinds of songs are included. Popular hits are well received by high school age students. Children's ditties are fun and easy to learn. Traditional songs, holiday songs, folk-songs, country-western, and other types contribute to an understanding of our culture.

## SONG LIST

The Star Spangled Banner.....	28
White Christmas.....	30
Show Me the Way to Go Home.....	31
Marzey Doats.....	32
Down By the Old Mill Stream.....	33
Oh Susannah.....	34
Happy Birthday.....	35
Hokey Pokey.....	36
The Donkey Song.....	37
Pardon Me.....	38
In My Room.....	39
California Girls.....	40
I Will.....	42
She's Leaving Home.....	43
City of New Orleans.....	45
Buddy Can You Spare a Dime?.....	47
Desperado.....	48
Big John.....	50
Longer Than.....	51
Traffic Jam.....	52

## KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

pr	present
pf	perfect
cnt	continuous
end	conditional
fut	future
past	past
psv	passive
imtv	imperative
Q	question
ng	negative
M	modal or quasi-modal

## THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER - Francis Scott Key

1 M pr        Oh, say, can you see by the dawn's early light  
 2 past        What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last  
 3               gleaming?  
 3- past/  
 3- past cnt Q Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the  
 4 past/  
 4 past cnt Q O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly  
 5               streaming?  
 5               And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,  
 6 past        Gave proof through the night that our flag was  
              still there.

7 M pr Q        Oh say, does that star spangled banner yet wave  
 8               O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave?

9               On the shore dimly seen, through the mist of the deep,  
 10 pr        Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,  
 11 pr Q        What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,  
 12 pr        As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?  
 13 pr        Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,  
 14 pr        In full glory reflected, now shines on the stream.

15 pr/cnd       'Tis the star spangled banner! Oh long may it wave,  
 16               O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

17 pr/fut       Oh, thus be it ever when free men shall stand  
 18               Between their loved homes and the war's desolation.  
 19 cnd        Blessed with vict'ry and peace, may the heav'n  
              rescued land  
 20 pr/prf       Praise the power that hath made and preserved  
              us a nation.

21 M pr/pr       Then conquer we must, when our cause, it is just,  
 22 pr        And this be our motto "In God is our trust!"

23 fut        And the star spangled banner in triumph shall wave  
              O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.





Modals and Auxiliaries

can  
 does (do)  
 shall  
 hath  
 must  
 may  
 BE -- were

Verbs

say  
 see  
 hail  
 gleam  
 watch  
 BE - was  
       is  
 burst  
 gave (give)  
 wave  
 seen (see)  
 repose  
 blow  
 conceal  
 disclose  
 catch  
 reflect  
 shine  
 spangle  
 stand  
 bless  
 rescued  
 praise  
 made (make)  
 preserve  
 conquer

Expressions

star spangled banner  
 oh  
 say  
 "may" as wish or blessing  
 still  
 yet  
 ever

Ideas for Discussion

national anthem - origin of the song  
 patriotism -  
       contrast with current sentiment  
 War of 1812

Mechanical Considerations

adverbial and adjective phrases  
 antiquated poetic speech  
 syntax  
 tenses  
 vocabulary  
 use of modals

## WHITE CHRISTMAS - Sung by Bing Crosby

1 pr cnt I'm dreaming of a white Christmas  
 2 past Just like the ones I used to know,  
 3 past When the tree-tops glistened  
 4 past And children listened to hear  
 5 Sleigh-bells in the snow.

6 pr cnt I'm dreaming of a white Christmas  
 7 pr With every Christmas card I write.  
 8 M pr May your days be merry and bright,  
 9 M pr And may all your Christmases be white.

Modals and Auxiliaries

am (be)  
 used to  
 may

Verbs

dream  
 know  
 glisten  
 listen  
 hear  
 write  
 be

Ideas for Discussion

Bing Crosby  
 holiday traditions  
 mood, description

Expressions and Allusions

white Christmas  
 tree-tops glisten  
 sleigh-bells  
 children listen  
 Christmas card  
 use of "merry" in holiday context  
 just like  
 hear/listen

Mechanical Considerations

tenses  
 "may" for blessing  
 use of infinitives  
 rhymes and spellings

## Version I      SHOW ME THE WAY TO GO HOME - Old army song

1 imtv      Show me the way to go home;  
 2 pr        I'm tired and I wanna go to bed.  
 3 past      I had a little drink about an hour ago  
 4 past      And it went right to my head.  
 5 cnd        Wherever I may roam -  
 6            Over land or sea or foam,  
 7 M pr      You can always a-hear me singing that song,  
 8 imtv      Show me the way to go home.

## Version II      INDICATE THE WAY TO MY HABITUAL ABODE

9 imtv      Indicate the way to my habitual abode.  
 10 pr        I'm fatigued and I wanna retire.  
 11 past      I imbibed a beverage sixty minutes ago  
 12 past      And it went right to my cerebellum.  
 13 cnd        Wherever I may perambulate -  
 14            Over terra-firma, H<sub>2</sub>O, or atmospheric pressure,  
 15 M pr      You can always a-hear me chanting this melody,  
 16 imtv      Indicate the way to my habitual abode.

Modals

may  
 can

Verbs

show  
 to be tired  
 want  
 go to bed  
 had (have) a drink  
 went (go)  
 roam  
 hear  
 sing

indicate  
 to be fatigued  
 retire  
 imbibe  
 perambulate  
 chant

Expressions

the way to  
 to go home  
 to go to bed  
 to have a drink (alcohol)  
 went right to my head  
 wherever  
 terra-firma  
 H<sub>2</sub>O  
 atmospheric pressure

Considerations

soldier song/camp song  
 contrast of latinate and  
 anglo-saxon elements  
 reduction and rhythm  
 extra syllable - lines 7, 15  
 tenses  
 rhymes and spellings

## MARZEY DOATS AND DOZEY DOATS

- 1 Marzey doats and dozey doats  
 2 An' liddle lamzey-divey;  
 3 A-kiddley divey too, wouldn't you?
- 4 pr If the words sound queer  
 5 And funny to your ear,  
 6 A little bit jumbled and jivey,  
 7 imtv Sing -
- 8 pr Mares eat oats, and does eat oats  
 9 pr And little lambs eat ivy;  
 10 fut/cnd A kid will eat ivy too, wouldn't you?

(Repeat ist stanza.)

Modals

will  
 wouldn't (would)

Verbs

sound  
 jumble  
 sing  
 eat

Vocabulary and Expressions

queer  
 funny  
 jumbled  
 jivey  
 mares  
 does  
 lambs  
 kid  
 oats  
 ivy  
 a little bit

Mechanical Considerations

if  
 will/would  
 pronunciation  
 reduction  
 rhythm

## DOWN BY THE OLD MILL STREAM

1 Down by the old  
 2 (not the new but the old)  
 3 Mill stream  
 4 (not the river but the stream)  
 5 Where I first  
 6 (not ~~second~~ but first)  
 7 past Met you  
 8 (not me but you)  
 9 With your eyes  
 10 (not your ears but your eyes)  
 11 Of blue  
 12 (not green but blue)  
 13 past Dressed in gingham  
 14 (not satin but gingham)  
 15 Too  
 16 (not one but two)  
 17 It was there  
 18 (not here but there)  
 19 past I knew  
 20 past (not thought but knew)  
 21 past That you loved  
 22 past (not hated but loved)  
 23 We true  
 24 (not false but true)  
 25 Down by the old  
 26 (not the new but the old)  
 27 Mill stream  
 28 (not the river but the stream).

Verbs

met (meet)  
 dress  
 was (be)  
 knew (know)  
 thought (think)  
 love  
 hate

Considerations

barbershop quartets  
 opposites and differences  
 puns  
 not \_\_\_ but \_\_\_  
 rhythm  
 past tense

## OH SUSANNAH! - By Stephen Foster

- 1 past I came from Alabama  
 2 With a banjo on my knee.  
 3 pr cnt I'm going to Louisiana  
 4 My true love for to see.
- 5 past It rained all night the day left;  
 6 past The weather, it was dry.  
 7 past The sun so hot I froze to death.  
 8 imtv ng Susannah, don't you cry.
- 9 Oh, Susannah,  
 10 imtv ng Oh don't you cry for me.  
 11 pr pf I've come from Alabama  
 12 With a banjo on my knee.
- 13 past I had a dream the other night  
 14 past When everything was still.  
 15 past I thought I saw Susannah dear  
 16 A'comin' down the hill.
- 17 past The buckwheat cake was in her mouth,  
 18 past The tear was in her eye.  
 19 pr/pr pf Says I, I've come up from the South,  
 20 imtv ng Susannah, don't you cry.

(Repeat 3rd stanza.)

Modals and Auxiliaries

BE - am  
 don't (do)  
 have

Verbs

came (come)  
 go  
 see  
 rain  
 left (leave)  
 was (be)  
 froze (freeze)  
 cry  
 had (have)  
 thought (think)  
 say

Allusions and Expressions

to come from  
 to go to  
 the South  
 banjo  
 buckwheat cake  
 my true love  
 to freeze to death  
 the other night

Ideas for Discussion

place names and  
 allusions  
 humor in contradiction  
 folksongs

Mechanical  
 Considerations

colloquialisms  
 rhythm  
 reductions  
 extra syllables  
 intensification  
 of imperative  
 with "you"  
 comprehension  
 stanza 2.  
 tenses

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY -

Happy birthday to you,  
Happy birthday to you,  
Happy birthday dear ----,  
Happy birthday to you.

Considerations

birthday traditions and conventions

happy birthday

pronunciation -

repetition of "R" & "H" sounds

rhythm



## HOKEY POKEY - Children's dance

1 pr You put your right foot in,  
 2 pr You take your right foot out,  
 3 pr You put your right foot in,  
 4 pr And you shake it all about.  
 5 pr You do the Hokey Pokey  
 6 pr And you turn yourself around -  
 7 pr That's what it's all about.

(Repeat, alternating right and left, with  
 different body parts.)

<u>Verbs</u>	<u>Expressions</u>	<u>Considerations</u>
put in	right/left	for use as a dance
take out	body parts	repetition
shake		instruction
do		reflexive - yourself
turn		contractions
is (be)		prepositions

## THE DONKEY SONG - Children's song

1 pr Sweetly sings the donkey  
 2 At the break of day.  
 3 pr If you listen to him  
 4 pr/fut This is what he'll say:

6 Hee-haw! Hee-haw!  
 7 Hee-haw, hee-haw, hee-haw!

<u>Modals</u>	<u>Expressions</u>	<u>Considerations</u>
will	break of day hee-haw	line 1 - inverted syntax contraction - he'll if/will "H" sound
<u>Verbs</u>		rhymes and spellings rhythm and intonation times of day animal sounds
sing		
listen		
say		
is (be)		

## PARDON ME - Sung by Rodney Crowell

1 imtv Pardon me if I'm sentimental such as we say goodbye  
 2 prtv When we say goodbye.  
 3 imtv ng Don't be angry with me  
 4 cond Should I cry.  
 5 pr I'm a fool, but I love you, dear,  
 6 pr Until the day I die.  
 7 pr Now and then there's a fool  
 8 Such as I.  
  
 9 pr Now and then there's a fool  
 10 pr Such as I am over you.  
 11 past You taught me how to love  
 12 To love, and now,  
 13 pr You say that we are through.  
 14 pr I'm a fool, but I love you, dear,  
 15 pr Until the day I die.  
 16 pr Now and then there's a fool  
 17 Such as I.

(Repeat 2nd Verse)

Modal

should

Verbs

pardon  
 am (be)  
 say  
 don't (do)  
 cry  
 love  
 die  
 taught (teach)

Expressions

pardon me  
 to be angry with  
 I love you  
 dear  
 the day I die  
 now and then  
 to be a fool over someone  
 to make a fool of  
 to make a fool of oneself over  
 we are through  
 if/when  
 until  
 such as

Ideas for Discussion

country-western  
 parting and sorrow

Mechanical Considerations

tenses  
 contractions  
 forms of apology  
 pronunciation

## IN MY ROOM - From "Endless Summer" by The Beach Boys

1 pr/M pr      There's a world where I can go  
 2 pr            And tell my secrets, too,  
 3                In my room, in my room.

4 pr            In this world I lock out all  
 5                My worries and my fears,  
 6                In my room, in my room.

7 pr            (I) Do my dreaming and my scheming,  
 8 pr            Lie awake and pray;  
 9 pr            Do my crying and my sighing,  
 10 pr           Laugh at yesterday.

11 pr           Now it's dark and I'm alone  
 12 fut ng        And I won't be afraid,  
 13                In my room, in my room.

Modals

can  
 won't (will)

Verbs

BE - am  
       is  
 go  
 tell  
 lock out  
 do  
 dream  
 scheme  
 cry  
 sigh  
 lie  
 pray  
 laugh

Expressions

to lie awake  
 to tell a secret  
 it's dark

Ideas for Discussion

mood  
 need for solitude  
 The Beach Boys

Mechanical Considerations

non-referential it and there  
 3rd stanza - "I" unstated  
 "ing" noun formation  
 contractions  
 line 12 - negation & future  
 gerunds  
 prepositions-in, out, at  
 use of "do"

## CALIFORNIA GIRLS - From "Endless Summer" by The Beach Boys

1 pr Well, East Coast girls are hip;  
 2 pr I really dig those styles they wear.  
 3 pr And the Southern girls, well the way they talk,  
 4 pr They knock me out when I'm down there.  
 5 The Mid-west farmers' daughters  
 6 pr Really make you feel all right.  
 7 pr And the Northern girls, with the way they kiss,  
 8 pr They keep their boyfriends warm at night.

9 pr/cnd I wish they all could be California girls  
 10 pr (Wish they all could be California---)  
 11 pr I wish they all could be California girls.

12 pr The West Coast has the sunshine,  
 13 pr And the girls all get so tan.  
 14 pr I dig a French bikini, and Hawaiian girls  
 15 By a palm tree in the sand.

16 pr pf I've been all around this great big world  
 17 pr pf And I've seen all kinds of girls.  
 17 past cnd But I couldn't wait to get back in the States,  
 18 Back to the cutest girls in the world.

(Repeat lines 9-11, twice.)

Modals and Auxiliaries

could/couldn't  
 have

Ideas for Discussion

The Beach Boys

geographical associations  
 and stereotypes

Mechanical Considerations

tenses  
 geographical expressions  
 slang  
 wish/could  
 indirect objects

Verbs

BE - am  
 are  
 been

dig  
 wear  
 talk  
 knock out

make  
 feel  
 kiss  
 keep  
 wish  
 has  
 get  
 seen  
 wait

Slang and Expressions

hip  
 dig  
 knock me out  
 to keep warm  
 to get tan  
 really  
 so  
 feel all right  
 all around  
 great big  
 all kinds  
 couldn't wait  
 to get back  
 make you feel  
 all right

Geographical Expressions

East Coast	Hawaiian Islands
Southern	West Coast
down there -	French bikini
down South	all around the world
up North	the States
back East	in the world
out West	
Mid-west	
Northern	
California	

## I WILL - From "The White Album" by The Beatles

1 pr/pr <sup>f</sup> pf	Who knows how long I've loved you?
2 pr	You know I love you still.
3 fut Q	Will I wait a lonely lifetime?
4 pr/ fut	If you want me to, I will.
5 past	For if I ever saw you
6 past ng	I didn't catch your name,
7 past ng	But it never really mattered;
8 fut	I will always feel the same.
9 fut (I will)	Love you forever and forever,
10 fut	Love you with all my heart.
11 fut	Love you whenever we're together,
12 fut	Love you when we're apart.
	And
13 pr	And when at last I find you,
14 fut	Your song will fill the air.
15 imtv	Sing it loud so I can hear you.
16 imtv	Make it easy to be near you,
17 pr	For the things you do endear you to me.
18 fut	Ah, you know I will. I will. . . .

<u>Modals and Auxiliaries</u>	<u>Idioms and Expressions</u>	<u>Ideas for Discussion</u>
-------------------------------	-------------------------------	-----------------------------

Have  
will  
didn't (do)

with all my heart  
together/apart  
really - intensifier  
line 4 - wait understood  
the things (that) you do  
feel the same (way)  
catch your name  
for = because

The Beatles  
rock and roll  
romantic/dreamer  
love song.

Verbs

know  
love  
wait  
want  
see  
did (do)  
catch  
matter  
feel  
find  
sing  
fill  
hear  
make  
be  
endear

Expressions of Time

how long  
still  
lifetime  
ever  
never  
always  
forever  
when  
whenever  
at last

Grammatical Considerations

vocabulary  
syntax  
tenses  
use of *if* and *when*  
contractions  
referential and non-  
referential "it"  
iambic rhythm  
rhymes and spellings  
poetic license:  
"still" inversion - line 2  
deletion of "I will" in  
the 3rd verse

## SHE'S LEAVING HOME - The Beatles

1 pr Wednesday morning at 5:00, as the day begins,  
 2 Silently closing their bedroom door,  
 3 past Leaving the note that she hoped would say more,  
 4 pr She goes downstairs to the kitchen,  
 5 Clutching her handkerchief,  
 6 Quietly turning the backdoor key,  
 7 pr Stepping outside she is free.

8 She  
 9 past (We gave her most of our lives)  
 10 pr cnt Is leaving  
 11 past (Sacrificed most of our lives)  
 12 Home  
 13 past (We gave her everything money could buy.)  
 14 pr cnt She's leaving home after living alone  
 15 For so many years.  
 16 (Bye-bye.)

17 pr Father snores as his wife gets into her dressing gown.  
 18 pr/pr cnt She picks up the letter that's lying there.  
 19 Standing alone at the top of the stairs  
 20 pr She breaks down, and cries to her husband -  
 21 pr "Daddy, our baby's gone.  
 22 cnd Q Why would she treat us so thoughtlessly?  
 23 cnd How could she do this to me?"

24 She  
 25 past ng (We never thought of ourselves)  
 26 pr cnt Is leaving  
 27 (Never a thought for ourselves)  
 28 Home  
 29 pr pf (We've struggled hard all our lives to get by).  
 30 pr cnt She's leaving home after living alone  
 31 (Bye-bye)  
 32 For so many years.

33 pr Friday morning at 9:00, she is far away,  
 34 past Waiting to keep the appointment she made,  
 35 Meeting a man from the motor trade.

36 She  
 37 past ng Q (What did we do that was wrong?)  
 38 pr cnt Is leaving  
 39 past ng (We didn't know it was wrong)  
 40 Home  
 41 pr (Love is the one thing that money can't buy)  
 42 psv For something inside that was always denied  
 43 (Bye-bye)  
 44 For so many years.  
 45 pr cnt She's leaving home.  
 46 (Bye-bye)



Modals and Auxiliaries

BE - was  
 is  
 would  
 could  
 have  
 did (do)  
 can't (can)

Verbs

begin  
 close  
 leave  
 hope  
 say  
 turn  
 step  
 gave (give)  
 sacrifice  
 buy  
 live  
 snore  
 get into  
 pick up  
 lie  
 stand  
 break down  
 cry  
 gone (go)  
 treat  
 thought (think)  
 struggle  
 to get by  
 wait  
 made (make)  
 meet  
 know  
 denied (deny)

Ideas for Discussion

effect of the form -  
 hearing both sides  
 attitudes of parents and daughter  
 towards money and love  
 parent-child relationships

Expressions

to break down  
 to struggle hard  
 to get by  
 far away  
 to make an appointment  
 the motor trade (Britishism)  
 for so many years

Mechanical Considerations

tense contrast  
 gerunds as adverbial phrases  
 could/would  
 parts of the house  
 pronunciation

## CITY OF NEW ORLEANS - by Steve Goodman

1 Riding on the City of New Orleans,  
 2 Illinois Central, Monday morning rain.  
 3 Fifteen cars and fifty restless riders,  
 4 Three conductors, twenty-five sacks of mail.  
 5 On the south-bound odyssey,  
 6 pr The train pulls out of Kankakee,  
 7 pr Rolls along past houses, farms and fields,  
 8 Passing trains that have no name,  
 9 Graveyards full of old black men,  
 10 And the graveyard of the rusted automobile.

## CHORUS

11 pr Q Good morning, America, how are you?  
 12 pr ng Q/pr Say, don't you know me? I'm your native son.  
 13 pr I'm the train they call the City of New Orleans.  
 14 fut/pr I'll be gone five hundred miles when the day is done.

15 Playing cards with the old men in the club car -  
 16 pr ng A penny a point, ain't no one keeping score.  
 17 imtv/pr Pass the paper bag that holds the bottle  
 18 imtv And feel the wheels rumbling beneath the floor.  
 20 And the sons of Pullman porters,  
 21 And the sons of engineers  
 22 pr Ride their fathers' magic carpet made of steel.  
 23 Mothers with their babes asleep,  
 24 Rocking to the gentle beat.  
 25 pr The rhythm of the rails is all they feel.

## CHORUS

26 Night-time on the City of New Orleans,  
 27 Changing cars in Memphis, Tennessee.  
 28 fut Halfway home, and we'll be there by morning,  
 29 Through the Mississippi darkness  
 30 Rolling down to the sea.  
 31 pr And all the towns and people seem  
 32 To change into a bad dream.  
 33 pr ng The steel rails still ain't heard the news.  
 34 pr The conductor sings his song again,  
 35 fut "Passengers will please refrain -"  
 36 pr This train's got the disappearing railroad blues.

37 pr Q Good night America, how are you?  
 38 pr ng Q/pr Say, don't you know me? I'm your native son.  
 39 pr I'm the train they call the City of New Orleans.  
 40 fut/pr I'll be gone five hundred miles when the day is done.  
 41 fut/pr I'll be gone a million miles when the race is run.  
 42 fut I'll be gone. . . .

Modals and Auxiliaries

will  
 don't (do)  
 BE - are  
 am  
 ain't

Verbs

ride  
 pull out  
 roll  
 pass  
 rust  
 know  
 call  
 gone (go)  
 done (do)  
 play  
 keep (score)  
 hold  
 feel  
 rumble  
 made (make)  
 change  
 seen  
 heard (hear)  
 sing  
 refrain  
 has got  
 disappear

Ideas for Discussion

American geography -  
 trace the route  
 the social history and strata  
 strata described

mood

Expressions and Allusions

south-bound                    odyssey  
 rolls along  
 lines 8 & 9 - graveyards  
 good morning/good night  
 how are you?  
 say  
 the day is done  
 the race is run  
 a penny a point  
 to keep score  
 ain't  
 the paper bag that holds the bottle  
 club car  
 Pullman porter  
 conductor  
 engineer  
 magic carpet  
 halfway  
 the disappearing railroad  
 the blues

Mechanical Considerations

vocabulary  
 lines 7 & 16 - pass  
 two-word verbs  
 prepositions  
 gerunds  
 metaphors  
 colloquialisms  
 sentence fragments  
 train-like rhythm  
 pronunciation

## BUDDY, CAN YOU SPARE A DIME? - Sung by Judy Collins

1	past/past cnt	They used to tell me I was building a dream,
2	past	And so I followed the law.
3	past	Where there was earth to plow or guns to bear
4	past	I was always there, right out on the job.
5	past cnt	They used to tell me I was building a dream
6		With peace and glory ahead.
7	cmd cnt Q	Why should I be standing in line,
8		Just waiting for bread?
9	past	Once I built a railroad, made it run,
10	past	Made it race against time.
11	past/pr	Once I built a railroad. Now it's done.
12	M pr	Buddy, can you spare a dime?
13	past	Once I built a tower to the sun
14		Built of brick and mortar and lime.
15	past/pr	Once I built a tower; now it's done.
16	M pr Q	Buddy, can you spare a dime?
17	past	Once in khaki suits, gee we looked fine,
18		Full of that yankee-doodly-dum.
19	past	Half a million boots went slogging through Hell,
20	past	And I was the kid with the drum.
21	pr ng Q	Oh, say, don't you remember, they called me Al.
22	past	It was "Al" all the time.
23	pr ng Q/pr	Say, don't you remember? I'm your pal.
24	M pr Q	Buddy, can you spare a dime?

Modals and Auxiliaries

should  
can  
used to  
don't (do)  
BE - was  
am

Ideas for Discussion

Historical context -  
the Depression

political implications

conventions of begging -  
the hard luck story

Verbs

tell  
built (build)  
follow  
plow  
bear  
stand  
wait  
made (make)  
run  
race  
done (do)  
spare  
look  
went (go)  
slog  
remember  
call

Expressions and Allusions

right out on the job  
breadlines  
once  
made it run  
race against time  
Buddy - general name  
Can you spare . . . ?  
gee  
yankee-doodly-dum  
The kid with the drum  
say  
pal

Mechanical Considerations

tenses  
vocabulary  
pronunciation

## DESPERADO - From "Desperado" by The Eagles

1	pr ang Q	Desperado, why don't you come to your senses?
2	pr pr cnt	You've been out riding fences
3		For so long now.
4	pr	Oh, you're a hard one
5	pr pr	But I know that you got your reasons.
6	pr cnt	These things that are pleasan' you
7	M pr	Can hurt you somehow.
8	imtv	Don't you try the Queen of Diamonds, boy;
9	fut	She'll beat you if she's able.
10	pr	You know, the Queen of Hearts is always your best bet.
12	pr	And now, it seems to me some fine things
13	pr pf	Have been laid upon your table,
14	pr/M ng	But you only want the ones that you can't get.
15		Desperado
16	pr cnt ng	Oh, you ain't gettin' no younger.
17		Your pain and your hunger -
18	pr cnt	They're drivin' you home.
19		And freedom, oh freedom -
20	pr	Well, that's just some people talkin';
21	pr	Your prison is walkin'
22		Through this world all alone.
23	ng fut	Don't your feet get cold in the wintertime?
24	fut ng	The sky won't snow and the sun won't shine.
25	pr	It's hard to tell the night-time from the day.
26	pr cnt	You're losing all your highs and lows.
27	pr ng Q	Ain't it funny how the feeling goes away?
		Desperado,
28	pr ng Q	Desperado, why don't you come to your senses?
29	imtv	Come down from your fences.
30	imtv	Open the gate.
31	pr cnd	It may be raining,
32	pr	But there's a rainbow above you.
33	M pr	You better let somebody love you
34	imtv	(Let somebody love you)
35	M pr	You better let somebody love you
36	pr	Before it's too late.

Modals and AuxiliariesMain Verbs

DO - don't	come	laid (lay)	goes ((go) away
BE - have been	ride	want	come down
are	know	drive	open
is able	got (get)	talk	rain
ain't	please	walk	let
may be	hurt	snow	love
can, can't	try	shine	
will, won't	beat	tell	
(had) better	seem	lose	

Allusions and Expressions

Desperado  
 to come to one's senses  
 hard to tell  
 highs and lows  
 funny  
 fence-sitting  
 before it's too late  
 ain't  
 just  
 "why don't you" - suggestion  
 may be/but  
 cowboy metaphors:  
   out riding fences  
   driving you home  
   card-playing  
 card-paying metaphors:  
   Queen of Diamonds  
   to beat  
   Queen of Hearts  
   your best bet  
   laid on the table  
 weather metaphors:  
   lines 23 - 27, 32, 33

Ideas for Discussion

the tone of the song - warning  
 double meaning in the title  
 background of the speaker  
 background of the person he's  
   talking to  
 issue of freedom versus emotional  
   commitment  
 cowboy life (cards, language)  
   and the myth of independence

Grammatical Considerations

non-standard speech  
   reductions  
   double negatives  
 uses of "get" - lines 5, 13, 14, 21  
 tenses  
 modals and quasi-modals  
 two-word verbs  
 prepositions  
 gerunds  
 vocabulary  
 metaphors  
 rhymes and spellings  
 contractions

## BIG JOHN - The Shirelles

- 1 fut ng Q Big John, won't you come on home?  
 2 fut Q Ain't you gonna marry me?  
 3 pr My folks all wanna know  
 4 fut When the wedding's gonna be.  
 5 pr cnt They're making plans, shaking hands;  
 6 pr pf cnt I've been waiting so long.  
 7 psv Q Has something gone wrong?
- 8 pr ng Big John, if you don't come home,  
 9 fut M I'm gonna hafta leave this place.  
 10 pr/pr pf Folks know you've jilted me,  
 11 fut And I'll be ashamed to show my face.  
 12 pr cnt cnt They're making plans, shaking hands;  
 13 pr pf I've been waiting so long.  
 14 psv Q Has something gone wrong?
- 15 past/pr They all told me about the things you do.  
 16 past/pr If what they told me is true,  
 17 past/cnd They all said that I'd soon find out  
 18 pr cnt I'm wasting my tears upon you -  
 19 intv Get up, get up.  
 20 pr pf cnt I've been waiting so long.  
 21 psv Q Has something gone wrong?
- (Repeat stanzas 3 and 2.)
- 22 intv Get up, get up and come on home.  
 23 intv Walk on into town.

Modals

BE - ain't  
 been

will  
 have

Ideas for Discussion

Motown  
 fear of losing face

Verbs

come  
 go  
 marry  
 make  
 shake  
 wait  
 gone (go)  
 leave  
 know  
 jilt  
 to be ashamed  
 show  
 told (tell)  
 do  
 said (say)  
 find out  
 waste  
 get up  
 walk

Expressions

my folks  
 going to have to  
 making plans  
 shaking hands  
 to go wrong  
 jilted  
 to show one's face  
 to find out  
 they all

Mechanical Considerations

lines 1, 21, 22 -use of "on"  
 non-standard "ain't"  
 reductions  
 contractions  
 rhymes and spellings  
 use of "so"  
 vocabulary

## LONGER THAN - From "Phoenix" by Dan Fogelberg

1 pr pf	Longer than there've been fishes in the ocean,
2 past	Higher than any bird ever flew,
3 pr pf	Longer than there've been stars up in the heavens,
4 pr pf	I've been in love with you.
5	Stronger than any mountain cathedral,
6 past	Truer than any tree ever grew,
7	Deeper than any forest primeval,
8 pr	I am in love with you.
9 fut	I'll bring fire in the winters.
10 fut	You'll send showers in the springs.
11 fut	We'll fly through the falls and summers
12	With love on our wing.
13 pr	Through the years, as the fire starts to mellow,
14	Burning lines in the book of our lives,
15 pr	Though the binding cracks, and the pages start
16	to yellow,
	I'll be in love with you.
17 fut	I'll be in love with you.
	(Repeat 1st verse.)
18 pr	I am in love with you.

Modals and Auxiliaries

have been  
will

Expressions

to be in love with  
through the years  
ever  
start to

Ideas for Discussion

love song  
love stronger, more permanent  
and inevitable than nature

Mechanical Considerations

vocabulary  
comparatives  
tense contrast  
non-grammatical use of "fishes"  
gerunds  
infinitives  
metaphors



## TRAFFIC JAM - By James Taylor

1 imtv Damn this traffic jam!  
 2 pr How I hate to be late!  
 3 pr It hurts my motor to go so slow.  
 4 imtv Damn this traffic jam!  
 5 pr/fut (By) the time I get home my supper'll be cold.  
 6 imtv Damn this traffic jam!

7 past Well, I left my job about 5:00.  
 8 past It took fifteen minutes to go three blocks.  
 9 Just in time to stand in line  
 10 With the freeway looking at the parking lot.

(Repeat 1st stanza.)

11 past Now I almost had a heart attack  
 12 Looking in my rear-view mirror.  
 13 past I saw myself the next car back  
 14 Looking in the rear-view mirror  
 15 M pr 'Bout to have a heart attack.

16 past/imtv I said damn this traffic jam!  
 17 pr How I hate to be late!  
 18 pr It hurts my motor to go so slow.  
 19 pr/fut By the time I get home my supper'll be cold.  
 20 imtv Damn this traffic jam!

21 pr/pr ng Now when I die I don't want no coffin.  
 22 pr pf I've thought about it all too often.  
 23 imtv Just strap me in behind the wheel  
 24 imtv And bury me with my automobile.

(Repeat 1st stanza.)

25 Damn!

26 past Now, I used to think that I was cool,  
 27 Running around on fossil fuel,  
 28 past/post end Until I saw what I was doin'  
 29 past end Was driving down the road to ruin.

Modals and Auxiliaries

will  
 don't (do)  
 have

Verbs

damn  
 hate  
 BE - was  
 hurt  
 go  
 get  
 left (leave)  
 took (take)  
 stand  
 look  
 had (have)  
 saw (see)  
 die  
 want  
 thought (think)  
 strap  
 bury  
 use  
 run  
 do  
 drive

Mechanical Considerations

exclamations  
 expletives  
 non-standard -  
   reductions  
   deletion of words  
   double negatives  
 contractions  
 tense contrasts  
 imperatives  
 gerunds  
 rhythm  
 rhymes and spellings

Car Expressions

traffic jam  
 motor  
 freeway  
 parking lot  
 rear-view mirror  
 the next car back  
 wheel  
 automobile  
 running  
 fossil fuel  
 driving down the road

Other Expressions

well  
 damn  
 how---!  
 so  
 by the time  
 get home  
 lines 9 & 33 - just  
   just in time  
   just strap me in  
 to stand in line  
 to have a heart attack  
 almost  
 about to  
 all too---  
 used to  
 cool  
 the road to ruin

Ideas for Discussion

attitudes toward the automobile

### C. FURTHER SOURCES

For each of the songs included in this work, there are dozens of others that would have served as well. Following is a list of sources for additional ideas and music which you may find useful in the ESL classroom.

Carney, Peter M. Using Music to Teach English as a Second Language: A Guide to the Use of Song Lyrics. Brattleboro, VT: SIT, 1977. (A thorough and useful discussion of topics which can be taught in the ESL classroom using American music, plus the lyrics of thirty songs organized by topic area.)

Havelice, Patricia Pate. Popular Song Index. Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1975. (Includes a list of all songbooks with words and music which have been published between 1940 and 1972. Each song in these songbooks has been indexed by first line, title, and composer.)

Havelice, Patricia Pate. Popular Song Index - 1978 Supplement. Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1978.

Home Library Series. 54 Songs of 1960 - 1979. New York, NY: The Big Three Music Corporation, 1976. (Includes words, chords, and music.)

Lomax, Alan. The Folk Songs of North America. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1960. (Words, Music, and origins of over 300 folk songs, plus an annotated bibliography of songbooks, a discography, and a map of song-style areas.)

Macken, Bob, Peter Fornatele, and Bill Ayres. The Rock Music Sourcebook. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1980. (A thematic guide to the popular music of the last twenty-five years. A wealth of information.)

Nettle, Bruno. Folk Music in the United States: An Introduction. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1976. (Background history.)

11/21/02 DATE DUE