

**Class:** US History, 50 minute periods

**Unit:** Gilded Age and the Progressive Era

**Grade Level:** Grade 11. This is an accelerated class with less than five students currently on IEPs or 504 plans. Because our timeframe is only one year of US History, there is little opportunity to extend our lessons past one or two days.

**Topic:** Progressive Music

**Standards:**

- **USII.8:** Analyze the origins of Progressivism and important Progressive leaders, and summarize the major accomplishments of Progressivism.

**Statement of Purpose:** The intention of this lesson is to familiarize students with music from the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. Most, if not all, of them have favorite modern day singers, so this will be an easy activity for them to relate to. This lesson is adapted from one produced by the Library of Congress. It seeks to get students to think deeper about song lyrics, to explore political themes within them and understand how these themes may help shape popular opinion.

**Learning Objectives:** As a result of this lesson, students will

- Analyze song lyrics of the past
- Analyze how cultural items can help influence/shape our understanding of the political sphere
- Create their own song lyrics to illustrate a current national concern as well as one to describe an issue during the Progressive Era

**Time:**

**Activity**

**Day one:**

Students will be given a number of song lyrics to analyze. When appropriate, students will also listen to the lyrics. Choice of songs is at the discretion of the teacher (all are found at the Library of Congress in the links below). I have chosen “100 Years Hence,” “I would like to see ole massa's face again,” “Temperance Call Reform,” and “The Humbug Reform.” Have Acc students complete the “Thinking About Songs” worksheet, ignoring the “music” column for this activity. Discuss answers when finished.

**Day Two:**

Students will create lyrics to a current national concern they feel needs reform. For homework, they should create a second set of lyrics. This one should illustrate an issue faced during the Progressive Era. Teacher should get a few students to volunteer to perform their songs.

**Assessment:** As a result of this lesson, students will better understand the Progressive Era by studying cultural artifacts in the form of songs. They will be assessed by their own lyrical creations.

**References:**

- Songs of our Times activity from the Library of Congress:  
[http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/songs\\_times/index.html](http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/songs_times/index.html)
- American Singing: Nineteenth Century Song Sheets:  
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amsshtml/amsshhome.html>
- Music For the Nation: American Sheet Music, 1870-1885:  
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/smhtml/smhome.html>

**Materials:** Students should be given copies of song lyrics and song analysis worksheets. ACC students should use the “Thinking About Songs” worksheet, lower level classes may use the graphic organizer, “Thinking About Primary Sources...”(follow LOC links to get these and others you may choose to use); teachers can use the above Library of Congress resources to pick their own songs, but I have included here “One Hundred Years’ Hence,” “I would like to see ole massa's face again,” “Temperance Call Reform,” and “The Humbug Reform;” Song Lyric Rubric.

## ACC US History

## Song Lyric Rubric

**Instructions:** We have been looking at various songs that call for reform in American society. When we get to the 1960s and 70s, there will be no shortage of material there either. For this project, you will be creating two sets of lyrics in the style of early American composers. The first will be a composition about a national issue you feel needs to be addressed. For the second, you must choose an issue faced by citizens during the Progressive Era and create a song for/about them. Follow the rubric below for more guidelines.

<b>Lyrics</b>	<b>Poor D-F</b>	<b>Acceptable C</b>	<b>Good B</b>	<b>Superior A</b>
	Songs not turned in (0). At least one song missing; multiple grammar/spelling issues; incorrect facts; no effort is made to make a serious social commentary	Both songs turned in, but little effort to be serious. More than five spelling/grammar errors total. Minor factual errors.	Great effort to make meaningful lyrics that speak to a current problem of the day. No factual errors, fewer than five grammar/spelling errors total.	Both songs are presented in a unique and creative manner. No factual/spelling/grammar errors. Students may have also volunteered to perform, but is not necessarily a basis for an A.