

## Freedom Songs

*Parent Guide*, page 1 of 2

*Read the “Directions” sheets for step-by-step instructions.*

### SUMMARY

During this activity, you and your child will listen to some freedom songs on the Internet, and then make your own version of one of the songs.

### WHY

During this activity, you and your child will use compassion and art awareness skills to listen thoughtfully to music and think about how it might have been used in some historic situations. These skills are useful for historical research and thinking about the personal and community meanings of songs today.

### TIME

- 10 minutes to listen to songs
- 10 minutes to sing along
- 5 minutes for discussion
- 5 minutes to make new lyrics for “This Little Light of Mine”
- 10 minutes to record new lyrics

### RECOMMENDED AGE GROUP

This activity will work best with children in kindergarten through fourth grade.

### CHALLENGE WORDS

- **boycott:** to refuse to conduct business with a person, store, or organization, usually to express disapproval or to peacefully force changes
- **emotion:** a state of feeling
- **nonviolent:** a philosophy or strategy for change that opposes using violence
- **picket:** to walk or stand in front of like a fence-post, often in protest
- **primary source:** a historical document, photograph, or artifact written, created, or used by someone who experienced events at the time they took place
- **protest:** public demonstration of disapproval
- **segregation:** the practice of keeping people in separate groups based on their race or culture
- **sit-in:** an act of sitting in the seats or on the floor of an establishment as a means of organized protest (see the images of boys sitting at lunch counter)

## Freedom Songs

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#### GET READY

- Read *Freedom on the Menu* together. *Freedom on the Menu* is a story about the civil rights movement, as told through the eyes of a young girl. For tips on reading this book together, check out the [Guided Reading Activity](http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/pdf/freedom/lunchcounter_reading.pdf) ([http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/pdf/freedom/lunchcounter\\_reading.pdf](http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/pdf/freedom/lunchcounter_reading.pdf)).
- (*optional*) Visit ([http://www.folkways.si.edu/explore\\_folkways/civil\\_rights.aspx](http://www.folkways.si.edu/explore_folkways/civil_rights.aspx)) for more background information, related historical photographs, and a one-hour in-depth radio show.

#### YOU NEED

- Directions sheets (*attached*)
- Background sheets (*attached*)
- Strong Songs sheets (*attached*)
- Computer with Internet access and speakers
- (*optional*) Microphone and sound recording software

More information at <http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/freedom/>.



## Freedom Songs

*Directions*, page 1 of 3

*For adults and kids to follow together.*

1. Go to ([http://www.folkways.si.edu/explore\\_folkways/civil\\_rights.aspx](http://www.folkways.si.edu/explore_folkways/civil_rights.aspx)) and use the radio in the bottom right corner to play song 10, “This Little Light of Mine.” Have you heard this song before? This song was sung during the civil rights movement as a freedom song..

**Tip** Switch between songs on this player by clicking on the arrows. “This Little Light of Mine” is song number 10 of 12, as shown in the upper left hand corner.

**Tip** For extra fun, sing along with the parts you know.

2. Use the [Strong Songs](#) sheet to describe what you hear in three different songs used during the civil rights movement.
  - First, listen again to “This Little Light of Mine.” (song 10 on the radio program on [http://www.folkways.si.edu/explore\\_folkways/civil\\_rights.aspx](http://www.folkways.si.edu/explore_folkways/civil_rights.aspx))
  - Then, listen to a clip of “I’m Gonna Sit at the Welcome Table.” (<http://www.smithsonianglobalsound.org/listen2.aspx?type=preview&trackid=27593>)
  - Finally, listen to “We Shall Overcome” (song 5 on the radio program on [http://www.folkways.si.edu/explore\\_folkways/civil\\_rights.aspx](http://www.folkways.si.edu/explore_folkways/civil_rights.aspx)).

**Tip** Historians would call these **primary sources**. A **primary source** is written, created, or used by someone who experienced events at the time they took place.

**Tip** To listen to clips of other versions of “We Shall Overcome,” visit [http://www.smithsonianglobalsound.org/cultural\\_heritage\\_03.aspx](http://www.smithsonianglobalsound.org/cultural_heritage_03.aspx) and find the links halfway down the page in the right column.

## Freedom Songs

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3. Listen to the songs again and try to sing along. Use the lyrics on the [Strong Songs](#) sheet. Act out the **emotions** you wrote down while you are singing.

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4. Think back to different parts of the story. Which song do you think fits best with these parts of the story?
  - Making picket signs
  - Listening to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
  - The boys sitting at the lunch counter for the first time
  - Seeing Sister in jail
  - Connie, Brother, and Sister eating at the lunch counter

**Tip** There are no right or wrong answers, but try to think of the characters' feelings during that scene and match the **emotions** to one or more of the songs from the [Strong Songs](#) sheet

5. Many of the songs were well known, but the song leader could change the lyrics to match the specific situation. For example, when changing the song "This Little Light of Mine" from a church song to a freedom song, the second verse became "Deep down in the South." Because of the segregation in the South, a lot of the civil rights movement focused on changing life for all people living in the South.

## Freedom Songs

### *Directions*, page 3 of 3

6. Use the [Strong Songs](#) sheet to change the lyrics of “This Little Light of Mine.” Make it a special song for the boys who first sat down at the lunch counter.

**Tip** Feel free to replace any of the lyrics. The blanks in the lyrics are only suggestions for changes you might want to make.

**Tip** Try to make your new song fit the rhythm and mood of the original song.

7. If you have a microphone, practice your new version of a song a few times, and then record yourself singing it. Be sure to use emotions that would match the scene in the book and what you know about the civil rights movement.

**Tip** Free, easy-to-use sound recording software is available for download at <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>.

## Freedom Songs

### *Strong Songs*, page 1 of 2

While you're listening to the songs, try to describe them. Write down any words that you think of, or use the words at the bottom of the page.

#### *“This Little Light of Mine”* (traditional song)

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine, oh,

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine, oh,

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine, Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

(2) Deep down in the South, I’m gonna let it shine, oh . . .

(3) We’ve got the light of freedom, we’re gonna let it shine, oh . . .

(4) God gave to us, we’re gonna let it shine, oh . . .

(5) All in the church, we’re gonna let it shine, oh . . .

(6) This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine, oh . . .

#### *“I’m Gonna Sit at the Welcome Table”*

(Adaptation of traditional song by members of SNCC\*)

I’m gonna sit at the welcome table, Oh Lordy

I’m gonna sit at the welcome table one of these days, hallelujah,

(2) I’m gonna be a registered voter . . .

(3) I’m gonna tell God on old Massy . . .

(4) I’m gonna sit at the welcome table . . .

(5) (I’m gonna sit at the Woolworth’s lunch counter . . .)^

*sad*      *fast*      *slow*      *bright*      *scared*      *somber*      *hopeful*  
*dramatic*      *confident*      *repetitive*      *mostly loud*      *mostly quiet*  
*about a group*      *includes religion*      *about an individual*  
*includes improvisation*

\*SNCC: Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

^: Although this recording of “I’m Gonna Sit at the Welcome Table” does not include this line, some recorded versions do include these lyrics.

# Freedom Songs

## Strong Songs, page 2 of 2

While you're listening to the songs, try to describe them. Write down any words that you think of, or use the words at the center of the page.

### “We Shall Overcome”<sup>©</sup>

(see copyright information below)

We shall overcome,  
We shall overcome, Oh Lord,  
We shall overcome someday.  
Deep in my heart, I do believe, oh,  
We shall overcome some day.

We are not afraid . . .  
We are not afraid today,  
Deep in my heard, I do believe, oh,  
We shall overcome some day.

*sad fast slow bright scared somber hopeful*  
*dramatic confident repetitive mostly loud mostly quiet*  
*about a group includes religion about an individual*  
*includes improvisation*

### “This \_\_\_\_\_ of Mine”

(to the tune of “This Little Light of Mine”)

This \_\_\_\_\_ of mine, I’m gonna let \_\_\_\_\_,

This \_\_\_\_\_ of mine, I’m gonna let \_\_\_\_\_,

This \_\_\_\_\_ of mine, I’m gonna let \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_!

“We Shall Overcome” is an adaptation of an African American gospel song by Lucille Sammons and members of the Food and Tobacco Workers Union, Charleston, S.C., Ziphia Horton, Frank Hamilton, Guy Carawan, Pete Seeger, and the southern civil rights movement, TRO © 1960 (renewed) and 1983 Ludlow Music, Inc., New York, N.Y., International Copyright Secured. All Rights reserved including public performance.

## Freedom Songs

### *Background Information, page 1 of 2*

For more information, visit the National Museum of American History Web site <http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/freedom/>.

Racial **segregation** was not illegal in the United States on February 1, 1960, when four African American college students sat down at a “whites-only” **lunch counter** at an F. W. Woolworth store in Greensboro, North Carolina. Politely asking for service, their request was refused. When asked to leave, they remained in their seats.



Image of students starting the sit-ins

From *Freedom on the Menu*

In Greensboro, hundreds of students, civil rights organizations, churches, and members of the community joined in a six-month-long **nonviolent protest** that spread to other places in the South. Many people continued to show their unhappiness through **sit-ins**. Others held **picket** signs on the streets outside the store with messages for people to see, while other people decided to **boycott**. All of these **protest** strategies caused Woolworth, and other businesses that practiced **segregation**, to lose customers and drew national attention. The **protests** put college students and young people into an important position in the ongoing movement to challenge racial inequality across the United States. Some of the people involved in the **protests** were sent to jail. Their commitment led to the end of **segregation** at the **lunch counter** on July 25, 1960; but, it took four more years before **segregation** finally ended across the country with the Civil Rights Act of 1964.



## Freedom Songs

### *Background Information, page 2 of 2*

Many people involved in the civil rights movement used songs as a source of strength and to spread their message. In many cases, the songs they sang were church songs or popular music with some words changed to match the situation. For more background information, photos, songs, and interviews, visit the Smithsonian Folkways Web site

[http://www.folkways.si.edu/explore\\_folkways/civil\\_rights.aspx](http://www.folkways.si.edu/explore_folkways/civil_rights.aspx).

The National Museum of American History added a portion of the Greensboro lunch counter to its collection after the Woolworth store shut down. Today, it is on display as one of the landmark objects in the Museum. For more information, visit

<http://americanhistory.si.edu/news/factsheet.cfm?key=30&newskey=53>.



A piece of the lunchcounter from Greensboro, North Carolina

At the National Museum of American History

### Facts and Fiction

*Freedom on the Menu* is a work of historical fiction for kids. To tell the main story clearly, the author wrote about a fictional family and pulled together details from slightly different times in history and locations in the South.

Check out *The Jim Crow Laws and Racism in American History* by David K. Fremon, a nonfiction resource, to get just the facts.

*How does your favorite song make you feel? Does it have a special meaning for you?*

*Turn up the speakers, listen closely, and start singing!*

*Freedom on the Menu: The Greensboro Sit-Ins* by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Jerome LaGarrigue. Text (c) 2005 by Carole Boston Weatherford. Illustrations (c) 2005 by Jerome LaGarrigue. Used by permission of Dial Books for Young Readers, A Division of Penguin Young Readers Group, A Member of Penguin Group (USA) Inc., 345 Hudson Street, New York, NY 10014. All rights reserved.

## Freedom Songs

*Teacher Guide*, page 1 of 5

*Read the Directions sheets for step-by-step instructions.*

### SUMMARY

Students will listen to some freedom songs on the Internet, and then make their own versions of one of the songs.

### RATIONALE

During this activity, students will use empathy, imagination, and art awareness to thoughtfully listen to music and think about how it might have been used in a historical situation. Primary source research is an important historical skill that both requires and hones critical thinking skills. Through guided research, students will ultimately build the ability to develop their own questions, find answers through careful analysis, and apply these research skills to historical and modern contexts.

### OBJECTIVES

The students will be better able to:

- describe the tempo, mood, or lyrical content of music.
- identify one or more protest strategy used during the civil rights movement.
- discuss feelings they believe would be associated with one or more protest strategy used during the civil rights movement.

### TIME

- 10 minutes to listen to songs
- 10 minutes to sing along
- 5 minutes for discussion
- 5 minutes to make new lyrics for “This Little Light of Mine”
- 10 minutes to record new lyrics

**AGE GROUP:** K-4

### TARGET VOCABULARY:

- **boycott:** to refuse to conduct business with a person, store, or organization, usually to express disapproval or to peacefully force changes

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### Teacher Guide, page 2 of 5

- **emotion:** a state of feeling
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- **picket:** to walk or stand in front of like a fence-post, often in protest
- **primary source:** a historical document, photograph, or artifact written, created, or used by someone who experienced events at the time they took place
- **protest:** public demonstration of disapproval
- **segregation:** the practice of keeping people in separate groups based on their race or culture
- **sit-in:** an act of sitting in the seats or on the floor of an establishment as a means of organized protest (see the images of boys sitting at lunch counter)

#### MATERIALS

- Directions sheets (*attached*)
- Background sheets (*attached*)
- Strong Songs sheets (*attached*)
- Computer with Internet access and speakers
- (*optional*) Microphone and sound recording software

#### PREPARATION

- Read *Freedom on the Menu* together. *Freedom on the Menu* is a story about the civil rights movement, as told through the eyes of a young girl. For tips on reading this book together, check out the *Guided Reading Activity* ([http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/pdf/freedom/lunchcounter\\_reading.pdf](http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/pdf/freedom/lunchcounter_reading.pdf)).
- (*optional*) Visit ([http://www.folkways.si.edu/explore\\_folkways/civil\\_rights.aspx](http://www.folkways.si.edu/explore_folkways/civil_rights.aspx)) for more background information, related historical photographs, and a one-hour in-depth radio show.
- (*optional*) For sheet music, quotes from people involved in the civil rights movement, and more historical background on individual songs, consider using the book *Sing for Freedom: The Story of the Civil Rights Movement Through Its Songs*, compiled and edited by Guy and Candie Carawan.

#### STUDENT PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- Communicates thoughts and feelings about the music that is heard.
- Substitutes different words in familiar songs to describe feelings and strategies related to the civil rights movement.
- Demonstrates an understanding of the basic elements of music.

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### STANDARDS

#### *NCHS History Standards*

##### *K-4 Historical Thinking Standards*

- 2D: Read historical narratives imaginatively.
- 2E: Appreciate historical perspectives.
- 3F: Analyze illustrations in historical stories.
- 4B: Obtain historical data from a variety of sources.
- 5A: Identify problems and dilemmas.

##### *K-4 Historical Content Standards*

- 1B. The student understands the different ways people of diverse racial, religious, and ethnic groups, and of various national origins have transmitted their beliefs and values.
- 4A. Demonstrate understanding of how the United States government was formed and of the nation's basic democratic principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.
- 4B. Demonstrate understanding of ordinary people who have exemplified values and principles of American democracy.
- 4C. Describe how historical figures in the United States and other parts of the world have advanced the rights of individuals and promoted the common good and identify character traits such as persistence, problem solving, moral responsibility, and respect for others that made them successful.

#### *IRA/NCTE Language Arts Standards*

- 2. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.

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3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

#### 21st-Century Skills

##### *Learning and Innovation Skills*

- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Communication and Collaboration

##### *Information, Media, and Technology Skills*

- Information Literacy

##### *Life and Career Skills*

- Social and Cross-Cultural Skills
- Leadership and Responsibility

#### ISTE National Educational Technology Standards (NETS.S)

##### *Creativity and Innovation*

- A. Apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or process.
- B. Create original works as a means of personal or group expression.
- D. Identify trends and forecast possibilities.

##### *Communication and Collaboration*

- A. Interact, collaborate, and publish with peers, experts, or others employing a variety of digital environments and media.
- B. Communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats.

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- D. Contribute to project teams to produce original works or solve problems.

#### *Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making*

- C. Collect and analyze data to identify solutions and/or make informed decisions.

#### *Technology Operations and Concepts*

- B. Understand and use technology systems.