

Lesson Plan: Split Dictation Activity using Bob Dylan Music

- **Target Audience:** ESOL or BL class using a communicative approach with music. This activity involves listening, speaking, writing and reading language skills. (Level 4+)
- **Goals:** Students will increase their auditory comprehension and pronunciation by combining their visual, auditory and writing skills.
- **Objectives:** Students will be able to pronounce and write the lyrics of a song.
- **Class time:** 1 hour
- **Materials:** Student Handouts (1-3)
 - Who is Bob Dylan? (Handout 1)
 - Partner A Worksheet (Handout 2)
 - Partner B Worksheet (Handout 3)
 - Full Song Lyrics (Handout 4)
 - Optional: Timeline of the Early 1960's (Handout 5)
 - Recording of "Blowin' in the Wind" and CD Player (Note: The song is available on CD from Paula and Rose).

Note: This activity can be used with any song that you choose. Use this lesson as a model. You can find lyrics to most songs online.

Lesson Flow:

1. **Ask** students if they are familiar with Bob Dylan. Who is he? Why is he famous? Do they know anything else about him?
2. **Ask** for volunteers to read aloud about Bob Dylan. (Student Handout 1)
Note: See item #8 below for optional material that can be incorporated here or at the end of the lesson.
3. **Listen** to the song, "Blowin' in the Wind". Do not hand out the lyrics of the song at this time. The focus of this part of the activity is on listening.
4. **Pair** students assigning them roles: "Partner A" and "Partner B". Give each student the handout that corresponds with their Role, A or B. (Student Handouts 2 & 3)
5. **Ask** Partner A to read the odd numbered lyrics to Partner B. Ask Partner B to fill in the words that they hear. Ask Partner B to read the even numbered lyrics to Partner A. Ask Partner A to fill in the words that they hear. Each partner alternates until they complete the entire song. Point out that they can receive help by asking: 1. Can you repeat that? or 2. Can you spell that? (This is noted on their handouts).
6. **Listen** to the entire song again to check for accuracy. Provide full lyrics to confirm accuracy. Ask for volunteers to read the lyrics. Provide feedback on pronunciation. (Student Handout 4)
7. **Ask and Discuss, OR Write:** Does Bob Dylan give the answer to the questions he asks in his song? Why or why not? What meaning does the song have for you?
8. **Optional:** For additional historical context, students can also read "Timeline of the Early 1960's." This timeline features Dylan's release of "Blowin' in the Wind" in 1963. (Student Handout 5)

Student Handout 1

Who is Bob Dylan?

Bob Dylan is one of the most **influential** singer-songwriters of the 20th century, known for songs that reflected social and political issues, for example, songs protesting war, nuclear weapons or **injustice**. Bob Dylan was born Robert Allen Zimmerman on May 24, 1941, in Duluth, Minnesota. While attending college, he began performing folk and country songs, taking the name "Bob Dylan." In 1961, Dylan signed his first recording contract. He became one of the most original and influential voices in American popular music. Dylan has received Grammy, Academy and Golden Globe awards, as well as the Presidential Medal of Freedom and the Nobel Prize for Literature.

"**Blowin'** in the Wind" is a song written by Bob Dylan in 1962. It was released on his album called "The **Freewheelin'** Bob Dylan" in 1963. The song asks a series of questions about peace, war and freedom. The **refrain** "The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind" has many meanings. After we listen to the song and work on the exercise, we'll talk about what the song means to you.



Vocabulary

- **Influential:** having the power to cause changes; having influence.
- **Injustice:** unfair treatment due to a situation in which the rights of a person or a group of people are ignored.
- **Blowin':** a shortened and informal way of saying "blowing."
- **Freewheelin':** a shortened way of saying freewheeling that means free and loose in style or manner; not held back by rules, duties, or worries.
- **Refrain:** a phrase or verse that is repeated regularly in a poem or song.

Student Handout 2:

Partner A

"Blowin' in the Wind"

1. How many roads must a man walk down
before you call him a man?
2. How many _____ must a white dove sail
before she sleeps in the sand?
3. Yes and how many times must the cannonballs fly
before they're forever banned?
4. The answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind;
the answer is _____ in the wind.
5. Yes and how many years can a mountain exist
before it is washed to the sea?
6. Yes and how many years can some people _____
before they're allowed to be free?
7. Yes and how many times can a man turn his head
and pretend that he just doesn't see?
8. The answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind;
the _____ is blowing in the wind.
9. Yes and how many times must a man look up
before he can see the sky?
10. Yes and how many ears must one man have
before he can hear people _____?
11. Yes and how many deaths will it take till he knows
that too many people have died?
12. The answer, my friend, is blowing in the _____;
the answer is blowing in the wind.

**Questions you can
ask your partner:**

1. *Can you repeat that?*
2. *Can you spell that?*

Student Handout 3:

Partner B

"Blowin' in the Wind"

1. How many _____ must a man walk down
before you call him a man?
2. How many seas must a white dove sail
before she sleeps in the sand?
3. Yes and how many times must the _____ fly
before they're forever banned?
4. The answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind;
the answer is blowing in the wind.
5. Yes and how many years can a _____ exist
before it is washed to the sea?
6. Yes and how many years can some people exist
before they're allowed to be free?
7. Yes and how many times can a man turn his head
and _____ that he just doesn't see?
8. The answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind;
the answer is blowing in the wind.
9. Yes and how many times must a man look up
before he can see the _____?
10. Yes and how many ears must one man have
before he can hear people cry?
11. Yes and how many _____ will it take till he knows
that too many people have died?
12. The answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind;
the answer is blowing in the wind.

**Questions you can
ask your partner:**

1. *Can you repeat
that?*
2. *Can you spell
that?*

Student Handout 4

Full Song Lyrics

"Blowin' in the Wind"

How many roads must a man walk down
before you call him a man?

How many seas must a white dove sail
before she sleeps in the sand?

Yes and how many times must the cannonballs fly
before they're forever banned?

The answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind;
the answer is blowing in the wind.

Yes and how many years can a mountain exist
before it is washed to the sea?

Yes and how many years can some people exist
before they're allowed to be free?

Yes and how many times can a man turn his head
and pretend that he just doesn't see?

The answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind;
the answer is blowing in the wind.







Yes and how many times must a man look up
before he can see the sky?

Yes and how many ears must one man have
before he can hear people cry?

Yes and how many deaths will it take till he knows
that too many people have died?

The answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind;
the answer is blowing in the wind.

Timeline of the Early 1960s

YEAR	HISTORICAL EVENT
<p>1960</p> 	<p>LUNCH COUNTER SIT-IN IN GREENSBORO, NC – On February 1st, four college students stage a lunch counter sit-in at the Woolworth’s department store in Greensboro, N.C. to protest segregation in cafes and restaurants. This sparked a wave of other sit-ins in college towns across the South. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, or SNCC (pronounced “snick”), was created.</p>
<p>1961</p> 	<p>FREEDOM RIDERS TRAVEL TO THE AMERICAN SOUTH – On May 4th, an integrated group of protesters begin their trip riding buses throughout the South to test new court orders that outlaw segregation on interstate public buses. Non-violent black and white riders are beaten by mobs in several cities.</p>
<p>1961</p> 	<p>BERLIN WALL CONSTRUCTED – On August 13th, construction begins on the Berlin Wall in Germany, separating West Berlin from East Berlin. Border guards in East Berlin are given “shoot to kill” orders for any resident who tries to cross. The wall remains until 1989, becoming the symbolic boundary between Democracy and Communism during the Cold War era.</p>
<p>1961</p> 	<p>RUSSIANS TEST HYDROGEN BOMB – On October 30th, Tsar Bomba, the largest nuclear weapon to ever be detonated, is exploded in the Arctic Ocean, north of Russia. Cold War tensions between the Soviet Union and the U.S., both armed with nuclear weapons, escalate heavily.</p>
<p>1962</p> 	<p>UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI ORDERED TO DESEGREGATE – On September 29th, President John F. Kennedy orders U.S. Marshals to the campus of the University of Mississippi to enforce the court-ordered admission of James Meredith, an African American student. Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett had blocked implementation of the court order to integrate the University, citing states’ rights.</p>
<p>1963</p> 	<p>MARCH ON WASHINGTON – On August 28th, several hundred thousand Americans participate in the historic Civil Rights march, featuring Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech. Musical acts also perform throughout the day, including Bob Dylan. That same month, Dylan releases a recording of “Blowin’ in the Wind.” The song establishes him as a powerful singer songwriter capable of penning and performing his own material.</p>