

COMMUNICATION

# Understanding a song

**LEVEL**

Upper-Intermediate  
(B2)

**NUMBER**

EN\_B2\_2051X

**LANGUAGE**

English



## Learning outcomes

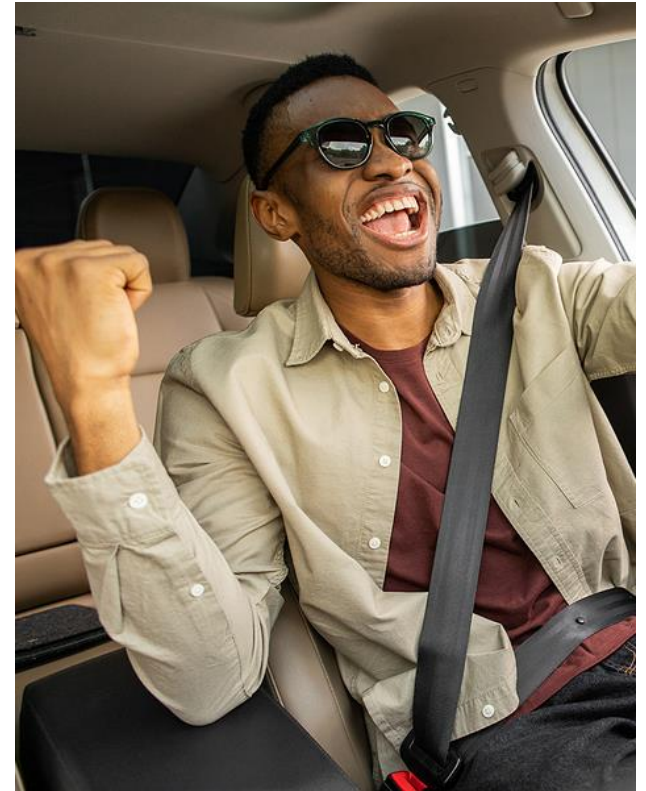
- I can read and analyse the lyrics of a song.
- I can give my views and opinions of songs and their lyrics.



## Warm-up

**Do you know the  
lyrics of any songs  
by heart?**

**Share your answer with the  
rest of the class!**





# Discuss

**Answer** the questions.



What is more important to you, the lyrics or the melody?

Do you think it's important to understand the lyrics to appreciate a song?

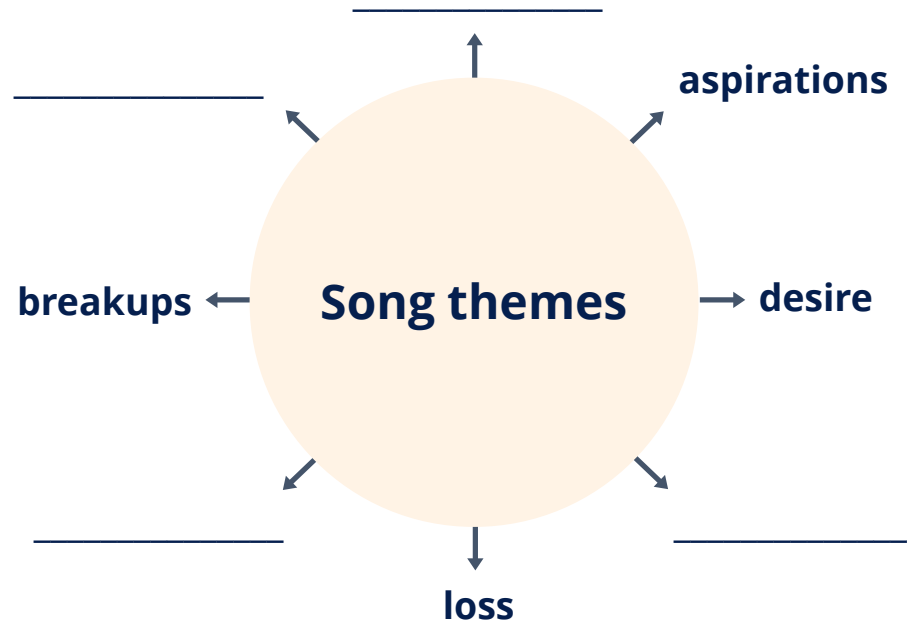
Is it easy for you to understand English song lyrics?

When you listen to a song, do you try to interpret the message that the lyrics are conveying?



# Brainstorm

1. **Think** of the songs you like to listen to.
2. **What are these songs about?**
3. Then, **think** of as many different song themes as you can.





# Scarborough Fair

1. **Read** about the song, Scarborough Fair, in the pink box. 2. **Read** the lyrics in the yellow box.

Scarborough Fair was a large agricultural fair held annually from the 1200s to the 1700s in Scarborough, England. Singers used to sing ballads about the fair on their way to it. The song is thought to be over 500 years old.



*Are you going to Scarborough Fair?  
Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme.  
Remember me to one who lived there.  
She once was a true love of mine.*



Ask your teacher to search for the song online and play the first 30 seconds!



# Scarborough Fair

In breakout rooms or together as a class, **answer** the questions below.

*Are you going to Scarborough Fair?  
Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme.  
Remember me to one who lived there.  
She once was a true love of mine.*

What do you think the theme of this song is? Why?

How might you say **'Remember me to one who lived there'** today?

Would you be interested to listen to the rest of this song? Why or why not?



# Who do you agree with?

**Chelsea** and **Matt** have just listened to Scarborough Fair.

1. **Read** their reactions below.
2. **Tell** your classmates who you agree with more and why?



**Chelsea**

Ugh, that has to be one of the most banal songs I've ever listened to! What's the point of listening to something with such archaic lyrics? It didn't resonate with me at all. When I listen to music, I want to understand what I'm listening to. Otherwise, what's the point? Scarborough Fair—no thanks!



**Matt**

I thought the song was affecting, even if I didn't understand most of the lyrics. It captures a specific time and place in history, and I think it's important that we listen to such songs every now and then. Music has certainly come a long way! The song makes me appreciate the music we have available at our fingertips!





# Matching

**Match** the words to their definition.

1

**archaic**

2

**to resonate**

3

**affecting**

4

**to appreciate**

5

**banal**

**a**

to recognise and value how good someone or something is

**b**

old-fashioned

**c**

to have a powerful, and long-lasting, effect

**d**

boring, not original

**e**

causing a strong emotion, usually sadness



The song makes me appreciate the music we have available **at our fingertips!**

If you have something at your fingertips, you can get it and use it very easily.

What other things are **at your fingertips?**



# Discuss

Answer the questions below.

**Do you think the folk songs in your country are banal or interesting?**



**Do you have similar musical tastes to your friends and family?**



# What's your opinion?

1. **Read** the statements below.
2. Do you **agree** or **disagree** with them?



Lyrics of popular songs are getting simpler over time.

Listening to music helps me study more effectively.

Song lyrics have the power to impact my well-being.

Writing song lyrics is not challenging—anyone could do it!





# End of the lesson

Idiom

***Blow your own trumpet***

**Meaning:** boasting about your own achievements or successes

**Example:** I don't want to blow my own trumpet, but I think I'm perfect for the job.



# Additional practice



# Fill in the gaps

**Complete** the sentences with the correct word.

- 1 I didn't understand most of the lyrics to Scarborough Fair. The lyrics were so \_\_\_\_\_. No one speaks like that anymore!
- 2 Even after all these years, the song \_\_\_\_\_ with me. It still brings tears to my eyes.
- 3 The film's music was incredibly \_\_\_\_\_. Nearly everyone in the theatre was crying.
- 4 Sometimes people only come to \_\_\_\_\_ a band's talent years, and even decades, after they've released their music.
- 5 My best friend's favourite band is playing in town next week. I find their music so \_\_\_\_\_. Listening to it makes me want to fall asleep.

banal

archaic

resonates

appreciate

affecting



# Discuss

Answer the questions below.

**Have you ever checked the lyrics of a song?**



**Have you ever misunderstood or misheard the lyrics of a song?**



# Game: What's the song's theme?

**Complete** the task in the pink box.

**1. Think** of a song theme.

**2. Take 3 minutes to write down** the lyrics of a made-up song that fits under this theme.

**3. Share** your lyrics with the rest of the class. Can your classmates guess your song's theme?



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## Answer key

**P.5:** *Suggested answers:* friendship, pain, rebellion, confusion, nostalgia, jadedness, celebrations.

**P.9:** 1.) b 2.) c 3.) e 4.) a 5.) d

**P.16:** 1.) archaic 2.) resonates 3.) affecting 4.) appreciate 5.) banal



# Summary

## Describing a song

- *archaic; to resonate; affecting; to appreciate; banal*
- *I think the themes of the song still **resonate** today.*
- *I found the lyrics very **banal**.*



# Vocabulary

archaic

to resonate

affecting

to appreciate

banal

at your fingertips

