

THE POWER OF WORDS

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The Power of Words

Skill Level

Intermediate, Grades 7-8

Learner Outcomes

The learner will be able to:

- Interpret the lyrics of a song.
- Compare and contrast different versions of a song.

Educational Standard(s) Supported

8.L.VAU.4
8.RL.KID.1
7.L.VAU.4
7.RL.KID.1

Success Indicator

Learners will be successful if they:

- Compare and contrast two different versions of the same song.
- Create a verse related to a current event.

Time Needed

45 Minutes

Materials List

Computer access to show videos
Copies of song lyrics

Introduction to Content

This lesson examines the popular song “We Are The World.” Students compare and contrast the 1985 and the 2010 versions of the song to identify similarities and differences and then brainstorm current events of which many people are not aware.

Introduction to Methodology

Students work in groups to identify similarities and differences between the two versions of the song. Students brainstorm current events that they can help raise awareness of through the song. The lesson concludes by students writing four to six lines of a song to accomplish this goal.

Authors

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Setting the Stage and Opening Questions

Share the following information with students:

Helping those in need never goes out of style and through the years various musical artists have come together to help others.

The song “We Are the World – Africa” was released on March 7, 1985, as the only single from the album. A worldwide commercial success, it topped music charts throughout the world and became the fastest-selling American pop single in history. The first ever single to be certified multi-platinum, "We Are the World" received a Quadruple Platinum certification by the Recording Industry Association of America.

"We Are the World 25 for Haiti" is a charity single recorded by Artists for Haiti in 2010. It is a remake of the 1985 hit song "We Are the World", which was written by American musicians Michael Jackson and Lionel Richie, and was recorded to benefit famine relief in Africa. Initially, in late 2009, it had been suggested to Richie and Quincy Jones—producer of the original "We Are the World"—that a re-cut version of the song be re-released under the title "Live 25." Following the 7.0 magnitude earthquake in Haiti, which devastated the area and killed thousands of people, it was agreed that the song would be re-recorded by new artists, in the hope that it would reach a new generation and help benefit the people of Haiti.

Ask the students the following questions:

Can you think of other ways that people can raise awareness for events?

Do you think a song is an effective way to raise awareness?

Tips for Engagement

As students are discussing in their groups, rotate to ensure that all group members are contributing to discussion. If you find that students are not engaged, ask them questions or their thoughts on a specific item to refocus their attention.

Experience

Begin by putting students into groups of four or less. Pass out a copy of the lyrics of each song for students to review. Say, “**We are going to watch the music videos for each of the songs we just discussed. Follow along with the lyrics and note any differences you hear between the two versions.**”

Show the following videos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P2H6mpUnsLI> (1985 Version)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Glny4jSciVI> (2010 Version)

Share

Say, **“In your groups, discuss the similarities and differences you noticed between the two songs. Then, talk about what issues each song is referencing. Make a list for both of these discussion topics and then we will share with the class.”**

Allow students to write their lists, discuss in their groups and then share with the class. Make sure they identify issues raised in the song.

Process

Ask students, **“Do you think songs like these raise awareness of events? What are some other ways you can think of that awareness can be raised?”**

Sample Responses:

- Fundraising events.
- Volunteering in the community.
- Advertisements.

Generalize

Say, **“For the remainder of class, we will be brainstorming and writing our own verses to these songs. In your groups, think of a current event that you could raise awareness of through song. Write down your top three choices and then we will share those as a class.”**

Apply

Say, **“You came up with some excellent ideas. In your groups, write four to six lines of a song that could help raise awareness of one of the current events you listed in your group or one we discussed in class. After you’ve finished, we will share those with the class.”**

Allow students to write their lyrics and then share them with the class. Challenge the students to complete their songs and film a video that can be shared on the County 4-H website.

Life Skill(s) from TIPPs for 4-H

7th Grade

Use the learned information in new situations to solve problems or change one’s behaviors (Head, Thinking)

Understand the obligations of citizenship (Hands, Giving)

Make appropriate use of equipment, tools and technology (Hands, Working)

8th Grade

Communicate accurate information on a given topic to someone else (Head, Thinking)

Communicate effectively (Hands, Working)

Supplemental Information

Educational Standards Met

8.L.VAU.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on 8th grade-level text by choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- a. Use context as a clue to the meaning of a word or a phrase.
- b. Use common grade-appropriate morphological elements as clues to the meaning of a word or a phrase.

7.L.VAU.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on 7th grade-level text by choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- a. Use context as a clue to the meaning of a word or a phrase.
- b. Use common grade-appropriate morphological elements as clues to the meaning of a word or a phrase.
- c. Consult reference materials,

8.RL.KID.1 Analyze what a text says explicitly and draw logical inferences; support an interpretation of a text by citing relevant textual evidence.

7.RL.KID.1 Analyze what a text says explicitly and draw logical inferences; cite several pieces of textual evidence to support conclusions.

"We Are The World"
(performed by USA For Africa)

There comes a time when we heed a certain call
When the world must come together as one
There are people dying
And it's time to lend a hand to life
The greatest gift of all

We can't go on pretending day by day
That someone somewhere will soon make a change
We're all a part of God's great big family
And the truth, you know,
Love is all we need

We are the world,
We are the children
We are the ones who make a brighter day
So, let's start giving
There's a choice we're making
We're saving our own lives
It's true we'll make a better day
Just you and me

Send them your heart so they'll know that someone cares
And their lives will be stronger and free
As God has shown us by turning stone to bread
And so we all must lend a helping hand

We are the world,
We are the children
We are the ones who make a brighter day
So, let's start giving
There's a choice we're making
We're saving our own lives
It's true we'll make a better day
Just you and me

When you're down and out
There seems no hope at all
But if you just believe
There's no way we can fall
Well, well, well
Let's realize that a change can only come
When we stand together as one

We are the world,
We are the children
We are the ones who make a brighter day
So, let's start giving
There's a choice we're making
We're saving our own lives

"We Are The World 25 For Haiti"

[Justin Bieber:]

There comes a time

When we hear the certain call

[Nicole Scherzinger & Jennifer Hudson & Justin Bieber:]

When the world must come together as one

[Jennifer Hudson:]

There are people dying

[Jennifer Nettles:]

And it's time to lend a hand to life

[Jennifer Nettles & Josh Groban:]

The greatest gift of all

[Josh Groban:]

We can't go on

Pretending day by day

[Tony Bennett:]

That someone, somehow will soon make a change

[Mary J Blige:]

We are all a part of

God's great big family

And the truth, you know love is all we need

[Chorus:]

[Michael Jackson:]

We are the world

We are the children

[Michael Jackson and Janet Jackson:]

We are the ones who make a brighter day

So let's start giving

[Barbra Streisand:]

There's a choice we're making

We're saving our own lives

It's true we'll make a better day

Just you and me

[Miley Cyrus:]

Well

Send them your heart

So they'll know that someone cares

[Enrique Iglesias:]

So their cries for help

Will not be in vain

[Nicole Scherzinger:]

We can't let them suffer

No we cannot turn away

[Jamie Foxx:]

Right now they need a helping hand

[Wyclef Jean:]

Nou se mond lan

We are the Children

[Adam Levine:]

We are the ones who make a brighter day

So let's start giving
[Pink:]
There's a choice we're making
We're saving our own lives
[BeBe Winans:]
It's true we'll make a better day
Just you and me

[Michael Jackson:]
When you're down and out
There seems no hope at all
[Usher:]
But if you just believe
There's no way we can fall
[Celine Dion:]
Well, well, well, let us realize
That a change can only come when we
[Fergie:]
Stand together as one

[Chorus - All:]
We are the world
We are the children
We are the ones who make a brighter day
So let's start giving
[Nick Jonas:]
Got to start giving
[All:]

There's a choice we're making
We're saving our own lives
[Toni Braxton:]
It's true we'll make a better day
Just you and me
[Mary Mary:]
We are the world
We are the children
[Tony Bennett:]
It's for the children
[Isaac Slade:]
We are the ones who make a brighter day
[Toni Braxton:]
So let's start giving

[Lil Wayne:]
There's a choice we're making
We're saving our own lives
It's true we'll make a better day
Just you and me

[Chorus - All:]
We are the world
We are the children
We are the ones who make a brighter day

So let's start giving
[Akon:]
There's a choice we're making
We're saving our own lives
It's true we make a better day
Just you and me

[T-Pain:]
We are the world
We are the children
We are the ones who make a brighter day
So let's start giving

[Jamie Foxx imitating Ray Charles:]
Choice were making
Saving our own lives
It's true we'll make a better day
Just you and me

[Rapping - LL Cool J, Will.I.Am, Snoop Dogg, Busta Rhymes, Swizz Beatz:]

We all need somebody that we can lean on
When you wake up look around and see that your dreams gone
When the earth quakes we'll help you make it through the storm
When the floor breaks a magic carpet to stand on
We are the World united by love so strong
When the radio isn't on you can hear the songs
A guided light on the dark road your walking on
A sign post to find the dreams you thought was gone
Someone to help you move the obstacles you stumbled on
Someone to help you rebuild after the rubble's gone
We are the World connected by a common bond

Love the whole planet sing it along

[Chorus - All:]
We are the world
We are the children
We are the ones who make a brighter day
So let's start giving
There's a choice we're making
We're saving our own lives
It's true we make a better day
Just you and me

[Kanye West:]
Everyday citizens
Everybody pitching in

[Singing - Children & Wyclef Jean:]
Nou se mond lan
Nou se timoun yo

[Will.I.Am:]
You and I

You and I

[Kanye West:]

Uh, 12 days no water
What's your will to live?

[Will.I.Am:]

We amplified the love we watching multiply

[Kanye West:]

Feeling like the World's end
We can make the World win

[Will.I.Am:]

Like Katrina, Africa, Indonesia
And now Haiti needs us, they need us, they need us

[Chorus - All:]

We are the world

We are the children

We are the ones who make a brighter day

So let's start giving

There's a choice we're making

We're saving our own lives

It's true we make a better day

Just you and me

[Wyclef Jean:]

Haiti, Haiti, Ha, Ha, ha, ha, ha

Haiti, Haiti, Ha, Ha, ha, ha, ha

Haiti, Haiti, Ha, Ha, ha, ha, ha

Haiti