

student activity 1

Name _____

Date _____

A Change is Gonna Come: Part One

Watch the lyric video for Sam Cooke's "A Change is Gonna Come," and then answer the following discussion questions.

- 1.** It is important to note that the lyric video was created in 2016.
What images are included in the video that illustrate the message of the lyrics?

- 2.** If the lyric video were to be updated to include images from 2016 to the present, what events/movements do you feel should be included?

- 3.** What emotions do the lyrics evoke?

- 4.** Do you think the lyrics of the song are timeless? Why or why not?
In other words, will they always be relevant in our society?

student activity 1

Name _____

Date _____

A Change is Gonna Come: Part Two

Read or listen to the 2014 NPR article “Sam Cooke and the Song That ‘Almost Scared Him’” and watch the 2015 CBS News clip about the story behind “A Change is Gonna Come.” Then, answer the following discussion questions.

- 1.** Why was a song dedicated to social change a risky career move for Sam Cooke? What were his concerns in releasing it?

- 2.** Review the following quote by Sam Cooke: “If you observe what’s going on and try to figure out how people are thinking and determine the times of your day, I think you can always write something that the people will understand.” Do you think this should be a primary focus for artists? Why or why not?

- 3.** What specific, personal incident inspired Sam Cooke to write “A Change is Gonna Come?”

- 4.** How does the text in the last paragraph of the article support the claim that Cooke’s song is timeless? Provide specific evidence from the text to support your answer.

student activity 2

Name _____ Date _____

Modern Protest Music

We have established that protest and message songs will always be present in our society. Thus far, the songs examined have spanned up to 2017.

Your job is to curate a playlist of four modern protest/message songs. For this activity, “modern” can be defined as the past 10 years. You can research online to find songs if needed, but an advantageous starting point might be your very own playlists! View familiar songs through the lens of their message and purpose. Another consideration worth noting is that the songs you gather need not be popular (i.e., Billboard charts, TikTok hits, etc.).

There is a great amount of lesser-known protest and message songs out there! Your job is to find them.

Song Title	Artist	What is this song protesting? What movement or event prompted it?	How does the song function as message music? What is the song's central message and what emotions does it invoke?
“March March”	The Chicks	2018 March for Our Lives: an organized demonstration by young people in support of gun control legislation	The song's chorus repeats “March, march to my own drum” insinuating a feeling of strength and standing up for your beliefs regardless of pushback and opposing forces.