

Editorial

The lesson idea based on the song and the questions in it may bring to mind Jane Revell's activity: *Find the Nine Questions* in "Top Class Activities" – Penguin books 1997. Fergal assures me that this is his original idea and adds: "They say there is nothing new in ELT, and it seems they are correct. I have never seen this book, and can assure you this idea is my own, so feel this acknowledgement is unnecessary. "



Link to www.tuneintoenglish.com.

From a Website: A Game and Song for the Present Simple Yes/No Question Forms

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Fergal runs the website www.tuneintoenglish.com with the aim of promoting the use of pop music as a language learning tool. With his touring Tune Into English Roadshow he encourages tens of thousands of students every year to listen to and use the language used in songs. He has taught at the Scuola Superiore, British Council and the University "L'Orientale" in Naples, Italy and has co-written a coursebook at lower secondary school level. He has conducted teacher training sessions throughout Italy as well as in Spain, Germany, Turkey, Bulgaria, Slovakia and Ireland.

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Introduction

It is no accident that the word "play" refers to both music and games – both engage students on an emotional level, involving them completely. Pop songs are a very powerful and motivating teaching tool, while games and quizzes challenge students, adding an element of competition and allowing them to use English for real purposes and with clear goals.

The following benefits are common to using both games and songs in the classroom:

- Participation
- The student is at the centre of the learning process
- Involvement
- They are engaged emotionally – effective learning (and indeed affective) is an emotional experience.
- Challenging, exciting
- A way of allowing learners to use language for a clear purpose
- Motivating
- Students will *want to*, as opposed to *have to*, use the target language.
- Encourage co-operative learning
- Students work in pairs or small groups, benefiting from each other's thoughts and ideas.
- Improve learner autonomy
- Develop a positive attitude
- Fun for both the teacher and the student!

This lesson plan uses both tools to practise yes/no question forms in the simple present at A1+ level, or higher.

Game

Warm up - Ask students if they like playing games. What is their favourite game?

Write the following dialogue on the board (before the lesson starts!), or print it onto a photocopy. If this is not possible, ask two students to role play it in front of the class.

A: Hey, let's play a game! Write a famous person's name on a piece of paper.

B: OK. Let me think... How about...

A: No! Don't tell me! Stick it on my forehead.

B: Are you crazy? Hmm...OK..

A: Now I've got ten questions, but the answers are only yes or no. Ready?

B: Yes or no... Yes!

A: Right... First... Is it a man?

B: Yes, it is!

A: Good! Is he American?

B: No, he's English.

A: Don't tell me! Say yes or no!

B: OK... No, he isn't American...

Ask students to role play this dialogue in pairs.

Students then play the game together. You can provide them with post-its if necessary. Allow them just 10 or 20 questions, or maybe give them a time limit.

Now tell students you would like them to guess who your favourite singer is. Students ask you up to 10 or 20 Yes/No questions to elicit Elvis Presley. (If students are aware that Elvis is not your favourite singer, you can tell them he is your friend's favourite!) Only accept correctly formed questions in the present simple.

Song

Explain that you will give them the incomplete lyrics of “Are You Lonesome Tonight?”, one of Elvis’s best known songs, which they will complete before listening to the song.

Vocabulary - write the following on the board (or on a photocopy), and ask students to match the words with their meanings. You can point out that “lonely” is more commonly used than “lonesome”. (note: this activity can also be done after the next activity).

lonesome	a modal used (with 1 st person or plural) for suggestions
miss	adjective to mean a lot of light
stray	hurt
bright	old word for room
empty/bare	the place you stand outside the front door
parlour	to feel alone
doorstep	to wander
pain	to wish someone (or something) was with you
shall	with nothing there

Correct, then write the following on the board, or print it onto a photocopy (note: there is a very similar printable version of this activity, with a link to the youtube video of the song, on the Downloadable Worksheets page in the Teachers’ Area of www.tuneintoenglish.com)

<u>Are you lonesome tonight?</u> _____	No, I’m not lonesome tonight.
_____?	No, I don’t miss you tonight.
_____?	No, I’m not sorry we drifted apart.
_____ to a bright summer’s day	No, my memory doesn’t stray to a
When I kissed you and called you sweetheart?	
_____ empty and bare?	No, the chairs in my parlour don’t seem empty....
_____ and picture me there?	No, I don’t gaze at my doorstep and picture...
_____?	No, my heart isn’t filled with pain.
Shall I come back again?	
Tell me dear, _____?	No, I’m not lonesome tonight.

Ask students to complete the gaps on the left using Yes/No questions (the answers are in the right hand column). Point out that some questions will use the verb *to be*, others the auxiliary verb *do*.

Allow them to compare with their partner, then play the song. Students check their answers while listening. Allow them to compare again, then correct in open class.

Sing the song together. There is a long spoken part, but tell students not to worry about this, just to enjoy Elvis’s wonderful voice!

Conclusion

This lesson works on all four skills, as well as grammar and vocabulary, through a game and a song. Most students are obsessed by pop music, and while Elvis may no longer be their favourite, they will find this lesson extremely motivating, probably being unaware they are practising the target language throughout.

Further worksheets using pop songs can be downloaded from the Teachers' Area of www.tuneintoenglish.com.

The Teaching through Music and Visual Art course can be viewed [here](#).

The Creative Methodology for the Classroom course can be viewed [here](#).