



Blowing In The Wind – Bob Dylan – Notes



Activity type: Vocabulary, Discussion.

Grammar: How much/How many.

Level: Elementary, Pre-Intermediate

Time: 20 minutes.

Song background: First released in 1963 on *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan*, this is one of Dylan's best-known songs. In 2004 Rolling Stone magazine placed the song at Number 14 in its list of The Greatest Songs of all time. It is was a very popular anti-war song in the 1960's, particularly during the Vietnam War, and Bob Dylan performed it for Pope John Paul II in 1997.

1) **Discussion.**

- a. Do you know Bob Dylan? Can you name some of his songs?
- b. What was the Vietnam War? What was the reaction of young America to the USA's involvement?

2) Write the following words on the board:

allowed
banned
to cry
death

dove
ear
to pretend
road

to sail
sea
time
year

- 3) Play the song. Students listen for the words, numbering them in the order they appear (if they appear more than once, refer to the first time). Do not correct at this stage.
- 4) Give each student a copy of the worksheet. Complete Exercise 1.
- 5) Check.
- 6) Before playing the song ask them to try to insert the missing words in the correct gaps, based on their answers to Activity 3) and Exercise 1.
- 7) Play the song. Students check their predictions in 6). Correct in open class.
- 8) **Discussion.**
 - a. Grammar: Why does Dylan use **how many**? Why doesn't he use **how much**?
 - b. This song is considered timeless, its message being relevant in today's world. Do you agree? Why or Why not?
- 9) Sing the song together!



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1. Use one of the following words to complete the sentences.

(you may have to change the form!)

allowed banned to cry death dove ear to pretend road to sail sea time year

1. Italy is in the Mediterranean _____.
2. Cars travel along _____.
3. I have been to Paris three _____.
4. I have been studying English for ten _____.
5. Elephants have very big _____.
6. The noun for 'dead' is _____.
7. A _____ is a type of bird that is the symbol for peace.
8. Christopher Columbus _____ to America in 1492.
9. Smoking has been _____ in public places.
10. My parents never _____ me to go to the disco.
11. Actors _____ to be someone else.
12. Babies always _____ when they are hungry.

2. Complete the song using the same words.

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

Yes, and how many _____ must the white _____ sail
before she sleeps in the sand?

Yes, and how many _____ must the cannonballs fly before they're forever _____?

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

How many _____ can a mountain exist before it is washed to the sea?

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

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

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

How many _____ must a man look up before he can see the sky?

Yes, and how many _____ must one man have before he can hear people _____?

Yes, and how many _____ 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.

3. Listen to the song and check your answers.





Blowing In The Wind – Bob Dylan – Complete



How many roads must a man walk down
Before you call him a man?
Yes, and how many seas must a white dove sail
Before she sleeps in the sand?
Yes, and how many times must the cannon balls fly
Before they're forever banned?
The answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind,
The answer is blowing in the wind.

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.

How many years can a mountain exist
Before it's 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,
Pretending he just doesn't see?
The answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind,
The answer is blowing in the wind.