



Do They Know It's Christmas? – Band Aid – Notes



- **Activity types:** Vocabulary (synonyms), listening for specific words, numbering, gap fill, discussion
- **Level:** Intermediate
- **Grammar Focus:** Let + object + base form of the verb
- **Notes:** BBC footage of starving children in Ethiopia prompted Bob Geldof to enlist his musician friends to record a charity single – on 25th November 1984 Britain and Ireland's most successful musicians (including Bono, Sting, Simon Le Bon and George Michael) gathered together to record this song. Released just four days later, it became the UK's fastest selling single ever, raising millions for famine relief and inspiring USA for Africa's *We Are The World*, as well as the following year's Live Aid concerts. It is estimated that Band Aid and Live Aid helped save the lives of over 6 million Ethiopians. There were two subsequent versions of the song, in 1989 and 2004, featuring the best-selling artists of the time (see last page of worksheet for full list of singers).

1. Give each student a folded copy of the worksheet and ask them to work on Activity 1, individually or in pairs/groups. They have to match the words to their synonyms. In a weak class or at a lower level you can use this as a dictionary training activity.

Key: 1G – 2H – 3B – 4E – 5D – 6J – 7A – 8I – 9F – 10C

2. Play the song. Ask students to listen for the words from the previous activity and to number them in the order they hear them in any form (e.g. singular/plural, etc.). If they appear more than once, refer to the first time.

**Key: 1. BANISH 2. PLENTY 3. SPREAD 4. DREAD 5. FEAR 6. BITTER 7. RING
8. CHIMES 9. DOOM 10. GIFT 11. RAISE 12. FEED**

3. Feedback, then students unfold the page and fill in the gaps with the missing words, based on their answers to the previous activity and context.
4. Play the song again. Students check their answers in pairs or in groups, then correct in open class and sing together!

GRAMMAR FOCUS: Focus on "Let them know". The verb *let* here means "allow".

Write on the board similar sentences (e.g. *She let me come, Let him go*) and ask students to infer the pattern.

Key: LET + OBJECT + BASE FORM OF THE VERB

Which verb has the same pattern as *let*? **Key:** MAKE (e.g. *The film made me cry*)

Students can give more examples.

SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- What do you know about famine in Africa or in other poor countries in the world?
- Has anything changed in Africa since 1984?
- Do you know about the Campaign to Cancel Africa's Debt?
- What does Christmas mean to you?
- Comment on the provocative line "*Well tonight thank God it's them instead of you*"
- Can you find any stereotypes about Africa in the song? Are they correct?
(Note, the song insinuates that the continent has no rainfall or successful crops, and that there are no rivers in Africa.)



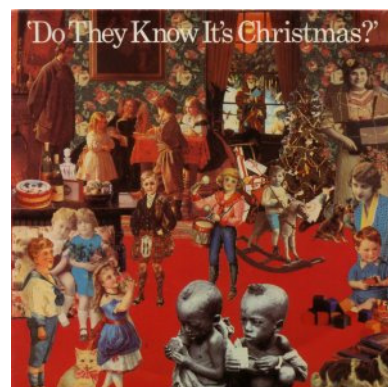
Do They Know It's Christmas? – Band Aid



Activity 1. Match the words with their synonyms:

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| 1. BANISH | A. ABUNDANCE |
| 2. FEED | B. DIFFUSE |
| 3. SPREAD | C. TERRIBLE FATE |
| 4. PRESENT | D. BITTER |
| 5. UNPLEASANT | E. GIFT |
| 6. FEAR | F. RAISE |
| 7. PLENTY | G. DRIVE AWAY |
| 8. CHIME | H. GIVE FOOD |
| 9. LIFT | I. RING |
| 10. DOOM | J. DREAD |

FOLD



Activity 2. Complete the song with 12 of the words from the list.

It's Christmas time, there's no need to be afraid
At Christmas time, we let in light and we _____ shade
And in our world of _____ we can _____ a smile of joy
Throw your arms around the world at Christmas time

But say a prayer, pray for the other ones
At Christmas time it's hard, but when you're having fun
There's a world outside your window
And it's a world of _____ and _____

Where the only water flowing is the _____ sting of tears
And the Christmas bells that _____ there
Are the clanging _____ of _____
Well, tonight thank God it's them instead of you

And there won't be snow in Africa this Christmas time
The greatest _____ they'll get this year is life
Where nothing ever grows, nor rain nor rivers flow
Do they know it's Christmas time at all?

(Here's to you) _____ a glass for everyone
(Here's to them) Underneath that burning sun
Do they know it's Christmas time at all?

_____ the world!
_____ the world!
_____ the world!

Let them know it's Christmas time!

_____ the world!
Let them know it's Christmas time!

(repeat to fade)





Do They Know It's Christmas? – Band Aid - Complete



Who sings what on each version

Lyrics	1984 version	1989 version	2004 version
'It's Christmas time, there's no need to be afraid'	Paul Young	Kylie Minogue	Chris Martin
'At Christmas time, we let in light and we banish shade'	Paul Young	Chris Rea	Chris Martin
'And in our world of plenty, we can spread a smile of joy'	Boy George	Jimmy Somerville	Dido
'Throw your arms around the world, at Christmas time'	Boy George	Matt Goss	Dido
'But say a prayer, Pray for the other ones'	George Michael	Cliff Richard	Robbie Williams
'At Christmas time it's hard, but when you're having fun'	George Michael/Simon Le Bon	Jimmy Somerville/Matt Goss	Robbie Williams
'There's a world outside your window, and it's a world of dread and fear'	Simon Le Bon/Sting	Marti Pellow/Jason Donovan	Sugababes
'Where the only water flowing is the bitter sting of tears'	Tony Hadley/Sting	Jason/Kylie	Fran Healy & Sugababes
'And the Christmas bells that ring there, are the clanging chimes of doom'	Sting/Bono	Cliff Richard/Marti Pellow	Fran Healy & Justin Hawkins
'Well, tonight, thank God it's them, instead of you'	Bono	Jason Donovan/Matt Goss	Bono
'And there won't be snow in Africa, this Christmas time'	Boy George/Paul Weller/Paul Young	Marti Pellow	Will Young & Jamelia
'The greatest gift they'll get this year is life'	Bono/George Michael/Boy George	Sonia	Will Young & Jamelia
'Where nothing ever grows'	Paul Young	Lisa Stansfield	Ms Dynamite & Beverley Knight
'No rain nor rivers flow'	Glenn Gregory	Lisa Stansfield	Ms Dynamite & Beverley Knight
'Do they know it's Christmas time at all?'	All	Sonia/Lisa Stansfield	All
'Here's to you'	Marilyn/Glenn Gregory/Rick Parfitt/Francis Rossi	Kylie	Tom Chaplin
'Raise a glass for everyone'	Paul Young	Kylie	Justin Hawkins
'Spare a thought this yuletide for the deprived' 'If the table was turned would you survive?'	2004 lines, not in the original version		Dizzee Rascal
'Here's to them'	Marilyn/Glenn/Rick/Francis	Matt Goss	Busted
'Underneath that burning sun'	Paul Young	Matt Goss	Justin Hawkins
'You ain't gotta feel guilt, just selfless' 'Give a little help, to the helpless YO!'	2004 lines, not in the original version		Dizzee Rascal
'Do they know it's Christmas time at all?'	Paul Young	Cliff Richard	Joss Stone and Justin Hawkins
'Feed the World' (repeat)	All	All	Tom Chaplin
'Feed the World, Let them know it's Christmas time again' (repeat)	All	All	All

(taken from Wikipedia)