



California Dreamin' – The Mamas & The Papas – Notes



- **Activity types:** gap fill.
- **Grammar:** Present Simple, Past Simple, Present Perfect, Second Conditional, Future *going to*.
- **Phonetic:** /eɪ/
- **Time:** 20 mins.
- **Note:** Released in 1965, this was written by newly-married singers John and Michelle Phillips in a cold New York winter. The song was inspired by Michelle's homesickness, with the second verse based on their recent visit to St. Patrick's Cathedral.

- 1) Ask students if they have ever been to California. What is the biggest city?
Key: Los Angeles, abbreviated L.A.
- 2) Give them one minute to write as many words as possible that rhyme with the letter 'A' (/eɪ/). Feedback.
- 3) Tell them they are going to listen to a song about someone who would like to be in L.A. – play the song, which words do they hear? Which word is spelled differently?
Key: See complete lyrics. Point out that 'grey' is spelled 'gray' in American English.
- 4) Give each student a copy of the worksheet. Ask them to work in pairs to complete the lyrics with the correct form of the verb.
- 5) Play the song. Students check and correct, then feedback.
Point out that the singer incorrectly sings 'like' instead of 'likes' in the second verse. The use of the Present Perfect in the first and third verses is also, arguably, incorrect.
- 6) Sing together!

Complete lyrics:

All the leaves are brown and the sky is grey
I've been for a walk on a winters day
I'd be safe and warm if I was in L.A.
California dreamin' on such a winter's day

Stopped into a church I passed along the way
Well, I got down on my knees and I began to pray
You know the preacher likes the cold
He knows I'm gonna stay
California dreamin' on such a winter's day

All the leaves are brown and the sky is grey
I've been for a walk on a winters day
If I didn't tell her I could leave today
California dreamin' on such a winter's day
On such a winter's day, on such a winter's day



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Complete the first verse with the verb 'to be' in the Present Simple, Present Perfect and Second Conditional:

All the leaves _____ brown and the sky _____ grey
I _____ for a walk on a winters day
I _____ safe and warm if I _____ in L.A.
California dreamin' on such a winter's day

Complete the second verse with the correct form of the verb in the Present Simple, Past Simple and Future for intentions:

(Stop) _____ into a church I (pass) _____ along the way
Well, I (get) _____ down on my knees and I (begin) _____ to pray
You know the preacher (like) _____ the cold
He (know) _____ I (stay) _____
California dreamin' on such a winter's day

Complete the second verse with the correct form of the verb in the Present Simple, Past Simple and Second Conditional:

All the leaves _____ brown and the sky _____ grey
I _____ for a walk on a winters day
If I (not tell) _____ her I (can) _____ leave today
California dreamin' on such a winter's day
On such a winter's day, on such a winter's day

