

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cohort: \_\_\_\_\_

**Learning Target:**

I can write blues lyrics from the perspective of a character from my book club book.

## Blues Song Part 1: Lyrics



What makes good blues lyrics?

The basic blues lyrics are called “Delta Blues” because they come from the Mississippi Delta region. They share (1) a theme, (2) the same number of lines, (3) a repetition pattern, and (4) a general number of syllables. Below, analyze the following blues songs for what makes blues lyrics.

### Example Blues Lyrics

**1. Give Me One Reason (Tracy Chapman)**

Give me one reason to stay here  
and I'll turn right back around  
Give me one reason to stay here  
and I'll turn right back around  
Said I don't want leave you lonely  
You got to make me change my mind

**2. Three O'Clock Blues (B. B. King)**

It's three o'clock in the morning  
and I can't even close my eyes.  
Three o'clock in the morning  
and I can't even close my eyes.  
Can't find my baby  
And I can't be satisfied.

**3. De Blues (Randy Sabien & Bob Phillips)**

A B C B A D D  
A B C B A  
A B C B A D-D  
A B C B A  
G F# G F# G A  
G F# G A F# D D

**I Was Chained (Mr. Shieh) – *Chains*, p. 182**

I was chained between two nations  
and they don't care 'bout me  
I was chained between two nations  
and they don't care 'bout me  
There's one that took my sister  
and the other won't help me flee.

I. Take some guesses: what makes a blues lyric?

a) What are some things these blues songs have in common (see intro above for ideas)?

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b) What do you *wonder* about blues lyrics? \_\_\_\_\_

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**II. 4 Requirements for blues lyrics (Mr. Shieh will tell you these):**

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_
- d) \_\_\_\_\_

**III. Write your own last 2 lines for “Three o’clock blues”:**

It's three o'clock in the morning  
and I can't even close my eyes.  
Three o'clock in the morning  
and I can't even close my eyes.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**IV. Brainstorm some possible lyric topics**

**a) ROLE: *pick your character***

Isabel	Curzon	Mr. Lockton	Lady Seymor
Ruth	Becky Berry	Madam Lockton	

**b) *what is important to your character?***

\_\_\_\_\_

**c) TOPIC: *what struggles or obstacles does your character have at different points in the book?***

\_\_\_\_\_

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character from *Chains*

**V. Use the lines below to write as many different lyrics as possible.**

Don't worry if the syllables aren't right. You can edit the lyrics later for your final draft.

A. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

D. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**V. Pick one of your lyrics, edit it, and copy your final draft below.**

- \_\_\_ Does each line has 5-8 syllables?
- \_\_\_ Are lines 1 & 2 similar to lines 3 & 4?
- \_\_\_ Do my lyrics express a struggle or difficulty from a *Chains* character?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Grading Rubric

4	3	2	1
<p><b>BLUES CONTENT</b> My lyrics express a struggle or difficulty for a character in <i>Chains</i> using powerful language.</p> <p><b>BLUES FORM</b> My lyrics have 6 lines, the first two pairs of lines are similar, and each line is 5-8 syllables.</p>	<p>My lyrics express a struggle or difficulty for a character in <i>Chains</i>.</p> <p>One of my lines is not 5-8 syllables. All other requirements are met.</p>	<p>My lyrics express a struggle or difficulty, but are simple and lack depth</p> <p>My lyrics are missing one of the following:            - 6 lines            - Lines 1 &amp; 2 = 3 &amp; 4            - 5-8 syllables per line</p>	<p>My lyrics either do not express a struggle or difficulty, or do not come from <i>Chains</i></p> <p>My lyrics are missing two or more:            - 6 lines            - Lines 1 &amp; 2 = 3 &amp; 4            - 5-8 syllables per line</p>

