

Name: _____

Date: _____

Cohort: _____

Learning Target:
I can write blues lyrics
from the perspective of a
character from *Chains*.

Blues Song Part 1: Lyrics

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

I Was Chained (Mr. Shieh) – 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.

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.

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

Directions: Look at the lyrics of the blues songs above, and see what they have in common and what makes them different. Some of the things you might notice include: (1) what the songs are about, (2) the number of lines, (3) which lines (if any) rhyme or repeat, or (4) the number of syllables in the lines.

Find at least 4 noticings and 2 wonderings.

I notice ...	I wonder ...

I. Practice writing your own "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.

II. Song lyrics requirements (we will do these as a class):

1. Songs are about some kind of struggle or difficulty.
2. Song is 6 lines long. Lines 1+2 and Lines 3+4 must be the same
3. Each line must have at least 5 and at most 8 syllables
4. Lines 2, 4, and 6 begin with the word "and"

III. Pick a character from "Chains"

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

IV. Find quotes from the text and use the questions below to brainstorm your lyrics

- What struggles does my character have?

Quotes:

- What is important to my character?

- If I were my character, what would I want to sing about?

- What obstacles stand in the way of my character?

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V. Write your lyrics

A. _____

B. _____

Some other blues lyrics that don't always match the Delta Blues form but are still pretty cool:

Gravity (John Mayer)

Gravity
is working against me
Gravity
wants to bring me down
Oh I'll never know what makes this man
with all the love his heart can stand
dream of ways to throw it all away

An Olive & An Arrow (Nick Jonas)

An olive
then an arrow in the back
She leaves me breathless
then she kicks me while I'm down
She leaves me hoping that my love won't show
'Cause I know she'll give me an olive and an arrow

Stolen Moments (Alicia Keys)

Remembering the days when our love began
Thinkin' of a million ways to escape and be with you
But reality wasn't just you and I
It was long drawn out days and lonely nights
Dreamin' 'bout you, I keep dreamin' 'bout you
When I'm dreamin' 'bout what you would say

Texas Flood (Stevie Ray Vaughan)

Well, it's floodin' down in Texas
all of the telephone lines are down
Well it's floodin' down in Texas
all of the telephone lines are down
And I've been tryin' to call my baby
Lord, and I can't get a single sound

(Additional Lyrics)

C. _____

D. _____

Grading Rubric

4	3	2	1
Lyrics follow blues content : they express powerfully a struggle or difficulty for a character in <i>Chains</i> .	Lyrics express a struggle or difficulty for a character in <i>Chains</i> , but the words aren't powerful.	Lyrics are simple and lack depth, or are not written from the perspective of a character in <i>Chains</i> .	Lyrics do not follow the content of the blues at all.
Lyrics follow the blues form : 6 lines, first two pairs of lines are similar, and each line is 5-8 syllables.	Lyrics are missing one of the requirements for blues form.	Lyrics are missing two of the requirements for blues form.	Lyrics do not follow the form of the blues at all.