

Music With a Message – Protest Music

I. Music has always been a form of expression.

II. EXAMPLE: Childish Gambino, “This is America”

a. What are some of the topics Childish Gambino raises in his song/video? (LIST)

b. What do you think makes this song/video an example of protest?

III. What is a protest song? (DEFINE) _____

IV. What types of events inspired protest music? (LIST)

V. **Protest songs in the 1960s** were inspired by _____

a. Examples: “Blowin’ in the Wind” and “War (What is it Good For?)”

PICK ONE OF THE SONGS TO ANALYZE

Song title: _____

What are the lyrics talking about? (LIST)

Why is this a protest song? What’s the message?

VI. **Protest songs in the 1970s & 1980s** focused on _____

a. Examples: Marvin Gaye, “What’s Going On?” and Grandmaster Flash, “The Message.”

PICK ONE OF THE SONGS TO ANALYZE

Song title: _____

What are the lyrics talking about? (LIST)

Why is this a protest song? What’s the message?

VII. **Protest Music in the 21st Century:**

“Alright,” Kendrick Lamar (inspired by the murder of black teens at the hands of white police officers.)

- a. Why did the protesters at Ferguson choose NOT to sing the 1960s song “We Shall Overcome” and instead chose to sing Lamar’s “Alright”?

- b. How do the song/lyrics express the feelings of people who were protesting the deaths of Michael Brown, Eric Garner, and others?

- c. How might singing this song be helpful for protesters? How could you make the case that singing is a way to unite people?
