

Teaching with Primary Sources Lesson Outline

- Grade Level:** High School (9-10)
- Standard(s) or Objectives:** CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

Library of Congress or Morris Special Collections Resources:



Walter Kent and Kim Gannon, "I'll Be Home for Christmas." 1943.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/ihas.100010539/>

Specific pages used:

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/ihas.100010539.0/?sp=2>

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/ihas.100010539.0/?sp=3>

Topic Background:

World War II America (1941-1945) produced a significant number of popular songs ranging from the patriotic to the sentimental. This was the era of Big Bands and Swing Music. Americans on the Homefront or overseas closer to the war zones, gathered to listen and dance to popular bands. Popular songs during World War II fall into a variety of categories. There were patriotic tunes such as Remember Pearl Harbor and Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition. Morale boosters helped lift wartime spirits. Many songs such as Bell-Bottom Trousers, A Boy in Khaki-a Girl in Lace , and First Class Private Mary Brown told the stories of soldiers, sailors, and their sweethearts. The themes of love and wartime parting and separation appeared in numerous examples: As Time Goes By, I'll Walk Alone, I'll Be Seeing You, and I Don't Want to Walk without You. As the war approached its end, there were songs about homecoming and the dreams of reunion: My Guy's ComeBack, It's Been a Long Long Time, and My Dreams are Getting Better All the Time.

Excerpted from: <https://library.syr.edu/belfer/programs/projects/belfer78/>

Source(s) Used:

The source used in this assessment is the song, "I'll Be Home for Christmas." On October 4, 1943, [Bing] Crosby recorded "I'll Be Home for Christmas" with the John Scott Trotter Orchestra for Decca Records. Within about a month of its being copyrighted the song hit the music charts and remained there for eleven weeks, peaking at number three. The following year, the song reached number nineteen on the charts. It touched a tender place in the hearts of Americans, both soldiers and civilians, who were then in the depths of World War II, and it earned Crosby his fifth gold record. "I'll Be Home for Christmas" became the most requested song at Christmas U.S.O. shows in both Europe and the Pacific and Yank, the GI magazine, said Crosby accomplished more for military morale than anyone else of that era.

*Crosby sang a revised version of this source version.

Excerpted from: <http://memory.loc.gov/diglib/ihas/loc.natlib.ihas.200000010/default.html>

Answer Key:

Question 1: D

Question 2: B

Walter Kent and Kim Gannon, “I’ll Be Home for Christmas.” 1943.

I’m dreaming tonight of a place I love. Even more than I usually do.
 And although I know it’s a long road back, I promise you
 I’LL BE HOME FOR CHRISTMAS,
 You can plan on me. Please have snow and mistletoe
 And presents on the tree.
 Christmas Eve will find me where the love light gleams.
 I’LL BE HOME FOR CHRISTMAS,
 If only in my dreams.

Questions:

- 1) Which of the following textual evidence best supports the understanding that the “voice” in this song was an American WWII soldier serving overseas? (CCSS-RH9-10.1)
 - a. The voice stated, “And although I know it’s a long road back.”
 - b. The song was titled, “I’ll Be Home for Christmas.”
 - c. The voice stated, “I’m dreaming tonight of a place I love.”
 - d. The song was written in 1943.

- 2) Which lyric best represents the central idea that “I’ll Be Home for Christmas” was meant figuratively? (CCSS-RH9-10.2)
 - a. “I’LL BE HOME FOR CHRISTMAS.”
 - b. “If only in my dreams.”
 - c. “You can plan on me.”
 - d. “Christmas Eve will find me where the love light gleams.”