



## Fences: An Odyssey Through Music

### Standards:

Writing Applications 2.2- Write responses to literature:

- a. Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the significant ideas in works or passages.
- c. Support important ideas and viewpoints through accurate and detailed references to the text and to other works.

### Objective:

Upon completion of the this assignment, SWBAT

- analyze how numerous song lyrics reflect the conflicts (either internal or external) characters from Fences endure
- write a coherent essay that reflects the evolution of a *dynamic* character in Fences, using specific examples and textual evidence

### Procedure:

1. Students will read the drama Fences as a class
2. Upon completion, students will receive a “Song Lyrics” Packet and Organizing Handout
3. Read the lyrics as each song is being played
4. After reading/hearing each song, complete the appropriate section of the handout, answering
  - a. Character reflected through song
  - b. Analyze lyrical and textual connection
  - c. Support analysis with specific lyrics and excerpts from the drama
5. Select one dynamic character from the play about whom to write a coherent essay



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Song Lyrics #1- "Giving Up" by Donny Hathaway

Giving up is hard to do  
When you really love someone  
Giving up .... so hard to do  
When you still depend upon  
Her warm and tender touch  
Her kiss and her hug.....her caress  
Ooooooh that used to mean so much  
And bring you happiness  
Woooo ooooooooh

Giving up, so hard to do  
I've tried  
But it just ain't no use  
Giving up, so hard to do  
I said I've tried  
But it just ain't no use  
But my light of hope is burning dim  
But  
But in my heart I pray  
That my love and faith in the girl  
My love...will bring her back someday

I'm talking 'bout when you really love someone

Whether  
Whether she knows or not  
She really needs me tooThe little girl is all I got  
Yes she is  
And giving, giving up is hard to do  
Giving up  
So hard to do  
Heey...giving up  
So very hard to do  
I said I've tried  
Hey, but I just can't get loose  
Giving up  
So hard for me to do  
I don't want to lose you  
Cause you mean so much to me



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Song Lyrics #2- "I Got Some Help I Don't Need" by B.B. King

All of your affection is gone baby and your love is growing cold  
I've said all of your affection is gone baby and your love is growing cold  
Hey, I've got a new story to tell you this evening, baby  
One that ain't never been told

I went to work the other day  
But I thought that I would double back  
And that car I saw sitting in front of my door Looked like a brand new, a brand new Cadillac, yeah!

I ain't got none now baby  
I think you've been cheating on me  
I believe to my soul baby, that you've given me some outside help  
That I don't think I really need

The iceman came by this morning  
And you know he didn't leave no ice  
The postman came by later baby  
And he didn't even ring twice

I think you've been cheating on me  
I think you're running out on me  
I believe to my soul baby, that you've given me some outside help  
That I don't think I really need

Now, I want you to tell the iceman  
The next time he'd better leave some ice  
And I want you to tell the postman  
He'd better ring more than twice

And when I come home from work in the morning  
Better still be some groceries on the shelf  
I want to tell that slick insurance man  
That he'd better write some insurance on his self

Yes, I think you've been cheating on me  
I think you're running out on me  
I believe to my soul baby, that you've given me some help, some help  
Some help, I don't really need



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Song Lyrics #3- "Papa Was a Rolling Stone" by The Temptations

It was the third of September.  
That day I'll always remember, yes I will.  
'Cause that was the day that my daddy died.  
I never got a chance to see him.  
Never heard nothing but bad things about him.  
Mama, I'm depending on you, tell me the truth.

And Mama just hung her head and said,  
"Son, Papa was a rolling stone.  
Wherever he laid his hat was his home.  
(And when he died) All he left us was ALONE."  
"Papa was a rolling stone, my son.  
Wherever he laid his hat was his home.  
(And when he died) All he left us was ALONE."

Well, well.

Hey Mama, is it true what they say,  
that Papa never worked a day in his life?  
And Mama, bad talk going around town  
saying that Papa had three outside children and another wife.  
And that ain't right.  
HEARD SOME talk about Papa doing some store front preaching.  
Talking about saving souls and all the time leeching.  
Dealing in debt and stealing in the name of the Lord.

Mama just hung her head and said,  
"Papa was a rolling stone, my son.  
Wherever he laid his hat was his home.  
(And when he died) All he left us was ALONE."  
"Hey, Papa was a rolling stone.  
Wherever he laid his hat was his home.  
(And when he died) All he left us was ALONE."

Uh!

Hey Mama, I heard Papa call himself a jack of all trade.  
Tell me is that what sent Papa to an early grave?  
Folk say Papa would beg, borrow, steal to pay his bill.  
Hey Mama, folk say that Papa was never much on thinking.



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Spent most of his time chasing women and drinking.

Mama, I'm depending on you to tell me the truth. Mama looked up with a tear in her eye and said,

"Son, Papa was a rolling stone. (Well, well, well, well)

Wherever he laid his hat was his home.

(And when he died) All he left us was ALONE."

"Papa was a rolling stone.

Wherever he laid his hat was his home.

(And when he died) All he left us was ALONE."

"I said, Papa was a rolling stone. Wherever he laid his hat was his home.

(And when he died) All he left us was ALONE."



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Song Lyrics #4- "Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood" by Nina Simone

Baby, you understand me now  
if sometimes you see that I'm mad.  
Don't you know that no one alive can always be an angel?  
When everything goes wrong, you see some bad.

But I'm just a soul whose intentions are good;  
oh Lord, please don't let me be misunderstood.

You know sometimes, baby, I'm so carefree  
with a joy that's hard to hide.  
And then sometimes it seems again that all I have is worry,  
and then you're bound to see my other side.

But I'm just a soul whose intentions are good;  
oh Lord, please don't let me be misunderstood.

If I seem edgy,  
I want you to know,  
I never meant to take it out on you.  
Life has its problems,  
and I get more than my share;  
but that's one thing I never mean to do  
'cause I love you.

Oh baby, I'm just human.  
Don't you know I have faults like anyone?  
Sometimes I find myself alone regretting  
some little foolish thing;  
some simple thing that I've done.

But I'm just a soul whose intentions are good;  
oh Lord, please don't let me be misunderstood.

Don't let me be misunderstood.  
I try so hard,  
so don't let me be misunderstood.



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Song Lyrics #5- "A Change Is Gonna Come" by Sam Cooke

I was born by the river in a little tent  
Oh and just like the river I've been running ever since  
It's been a long, a long time coming  
But I know a change gonna come, oh yes it will

It's been too hard living but I'm afraid to die  
Cause I don't know what's up there beyond the sky  
It's been a long, a long time coming  
But I know a change gonna come, oh yes it will  
I go to the movie and I go downtown  
Somebody keep telling me don't hang around  
It's been a long, a long time coming  
But I know a change gonna come, oh yes it will

Then I go to my brother  
And I say brother help me please  
But he winds up knocking me  
Back down on my knees

Ohhhhhhhh.....

There been times that I thought I couldn't last for long  
But now I think I'm able to carry on  
It's been a long, a long time coming  
But I know a change gonna come, oh yes it will



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Song Lyrics #6- "Open Up Them Pearly Gates for Me" by Doc Watson

Listen all of you sinners  
If you wanna go to heaven, heaven  
You'd better get right down on your knees and pray

All you gambling sinners  
You'd better get saved at 7-11  
You'd better get ready for to meet that judgment day

Open up them pearly gates  
Open up them pearly gates  
Open up them pearly gates for me

When you hear the trumpet blast  
I'll be coming home at last  
Open up them pearly gates for me

I done had a vision  
I seen them pearly gates a'closing  
And I seen you sinners all outside

You'd better make your decision  
And pray that you'll be chosen, chosen  
It'll be too late when you've laid down and died

Open up them pearly gates  
Open up them pearly gates  
Open up them pearly gates for me

When you hear the trumpet blast  
I'll be coming home at last  
Open up them pearly gates for me

You'd better go out to your chicken roost  
And ask yourself an honest question  
And the good Lord's gonna know it if you lied

You'd better turn all them chickens loose  
Or you gonna die from indigestion  
When you eat that stolen chicken pie





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Open up them pearly gates  
Open up them pearly gates  
Open up them pearly gates for me

When you hear the trumpet blast  
I'll be coming home at last  
Open up them pearly gates for me

You'd better take that ole keg of gin  
And dump it ever' bit right in the river  
And don't let ole Satan stay your hand

For if you fill it up again  
It's gonna get a hole right in liver  
And the gates won't open when you reach the promise land

Open up them pearly gates  
Open up them pearly gates  
Open up them pearly gates for me

When you hear the trumpet blast  
I'll be coming home at last  
Open up them pearly gates for me



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Song Lyrics #7- "Confessions Part II" by Usher

Watch this...

*[Chorus:]*

These are my confessions  
Just when I thought I said all I could say  
My chick on the side said she got one on the way  
These are my confessions  
Man I'm thrown and I don't know what to do  
I guess I gotta give part 2 of my confessions  
If I'm gonna tell it then I gotta tell it all  
Damn near cried when I got that phone call  
I'm so throwed and I don't know what to do  
But to give you part 2 of my confessions

*[Verse 1]*

Now this gon' be the hardest thing I think I ever had to do  
Got me talkin' to myself askin' how I'm gon' tell you  
'bout that chick on part 1 I told ya'll I was creepin' with, creepin' with  
Said she's 3 months pregnant and she's keepin' it  
The first thing that came to mind was you  
Second thing was how do I know if it's mine and is it true  
Third thing was me wishin' that I never did what I did  
How I ain't ready for no kid and bye bye to our relationship

*[Chorus]*

*[Verse 2]*

Sittin here stuck on stupid, tryna figure out  
When, what, and how I'mma let this come out of my mouth  
Said it ain't gon' be easy  
But I need to stop thinkin', contemplatin'  
Be a man and get it over with (over with)  
I'm ridin' in my whip  
Racin' to her place  
Talkin' to myself  
Preparin' to tell her to her face  
She open up the door and didn't want to come near me  
I said "one second baby please hear me"

*[Chorus]*



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*[Breakdown]*

This by far is the hardest thing I think I've ever had to do  
To tell you, the woman I love  
That I'm having a baby by a woman that I barely even know  
I hope you can accept the fact that I'm man enough to tell you this  
And hopefully you'll give me another chance  
This ain't about my career  
This ain't about my life  
It's about us  
Please

*[Chorus]*



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Organizing Handout

Song Title: "Giving Up"

Relevant to which Fences character: \_\_\_\_\_

Relevant song lyrics: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Supporting textual evidence (be sure to include Act, Scene, and line #s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Song Title: "I Got Some Help I Don't Need"

Relevant to which Fences character: \_\_\_\_\_

Relevant song lyrics: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Supporting textual evidence (be sure to include Act, Scene, and line #s): \_\_\_\_\_

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Song Title: "Papa Was a Rolling Stone"

Relevant to which Fences character: \_\_\_\_\_

Relevant song lyrics: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

Supporting textual evidence (be sure to include Act, Scene, and line #s): \_\_\_\_\_

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**Fences: An Odyssey Through Music**

Song Title: "Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood"

Relevant to which Fences character: \_\_\_\_\_

Relevant **song lyrics**: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Supporting **textual evidence** (be sure to include Act, Scene, and line #s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Song Title: "A Change Is Gonna Come"

Relevant to which Fences character: \_\_\_\_\_

Relevant **song lyrics**: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Supporting **textual evidence** (be sure to include Act, Scene, and line #s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Song Title: "Open Up Them Pearly Gates for Me"

Relevant to which Fences character: \_\_\_\_\_

Relevant **song lyrics**: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Supporting **textual evidence** (be sure to include Act, Scene, and line #s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Fences: An Odyssey Through Music

Song Title: "Confessions Part II"

Relevant to which Fences character: \_\_\_\_\_

Relevant **song lyrics**: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Supporting **textual evidence** (be sure to include Act, Scene, and line #s): \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_



## Fences: An Odyssey Through Music

### Culminating Essay Prompt:

In a coherent essay, trace the evolution of a *dynamic* character in Fences, using specific examples and textual evidence. For the purposes of this essay, you may (and are encouraged to) use your copy of Fences and any applicable notes and/or organizers.