

VIENNA'S *English* THEATRE



**THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND**  
**A Woody Guthrie Folk Musicale**  
devised by David M. Lutken

# WORKSHEET

by KATHRYN NIGHTINGALL

**school**  
**tours**  
2005/2006

This Land is Your Land  
SONGS AND WRITINGS  
BY WOODY GUTHRIE



WOODY GUTHRIE SELF-PORTRAIT

BASED UPON  
CALIFORNIA TO THE  
NEW YORK ISLAND  
BY MILLARD LAMPELL

ADAPTED FOR SCHOOLS BY DAVID M. LUTKEN

**Worksheet**  
by Kathryn Nightingall

School tours 2005/06

### **Part 1**

*Focuses on events of the day. Oral discussions and writing texts and essays. There are descriptions of events in history with questions and in some cases projects to work on. There are also theoretical questions about these events, what emotions photographs evoke, what the students thoughts are on certain texts written about historical events. Access to a computer would be helpful.*

1. *Biography and Introduction to Woody*
2. *The Dust Bowl*
3. *Migrant workers*
4. *The Bum Blockade*
5. *The Great Depression*
6. *The New Deal*
7. *World War II*
8. *The Almanac Singers*
9. *Huntington's Disease*

### **Part 2**

*This part will focus on the play. Ideas for discussions about the script.*

1. *Discussion of title Song - This Land Is Your Land*
2. *Page by page summary of play*
3. *Questions about the songs in the order that they appear in the play*
4. *Make a time line of the events in history*

### **Part 3**

*Focuses on Woody Guthrie's life - marriages, children, friendships and other important people in his life. His influence on today's musicians.*

1. *Excerpt from Woody's autobiography **Bound for Glory** and other pieces of text and sayings for analyzing and discussing.*
2. *What others have said about Woody such as Pete Seeger, John Steinbeck and Bob Dylan etc.*
3. *Marriages and children - where are they now?*

**Appendix - Leadsheets**

## Part 1

### 1. *Biography of Woody Guthrie*

Woodrow "Woody" Wilson Guthrie was born on July 14, 1912 in Okemah, Oklahoma to Nora and Charles Guthrie. He was named after the 28<sup>th</sup> U.S. President, Woodrow Wilson, who was elected in the year of his birth. Woody was the second of five children. His mother, Nora Guthrie, enjoyed music and singing, which influenced the young Woody and played an important role in his later life. His father, Charles Guthrie, did fairly well by the standards of Okemah and was able to support his family until a series of unfortunate events took place that changed the family's circumstances forever. During the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Okemah was one of the many oil boom towns in Oklahoma, but this was not to last. The oil boom ended, hurting the economy and then the Guthrie's new house burned to the ground before they could even move in. A few years later his sister, Clara, tragically burned to death in another fire and it was also around this time that Woody's mother began to behave strangely and erratically. She was diagnosed as being insane and was institutionalized in a mental hospital. It was later discovered that she had Huntington's Chorea, a rare degenerative disease that affects the nervous system and eventually results in death. These tragic events would forever play an important part in Woody's life, giving him his unique outlook on the world.

In about 1929, after his wife had been institutionalized, Charles Guthrie moved with the younger children to Pampa, Texas, where he had family. After a while, Woody joined them as well. Charles Guthrie's half-brother, Jeff taught Woody how to play the guitar and it was here that he discovered his musical ability. He formed a group called the Corncob Trio with two friends: Matt Jennings and Cluster Baker. Matt Jennings had a younger sister named Mary that Woody fell in love with. In 1933 they got married and together they had three children. The following years proved to be hard ones. First, The Great Depression, which had hit the United States in 1929, made earning a living difficult and then a decade of dust storms started in the mid-western U.S. in around 1931. For many years the region had been over-farmed and the natural prairie grasses had been depleted. When a season of drought began, the wind blew the dry earth so hard and high that one journalist named the region The Dust Bowl. A vast area of plains in the mid-west was absolutely devastated by these storms and many people lost their farms and homes. Literally thousands of people left the region in search of work, most of them headed west to California. They became known as "dust bowl refugees" or "Okies". The writer, John Steinbeck wrote about the plight of these migrant farm workers in his novel "The Grapes of Wrath". Woody decided to leave as well and hitchhiked, and hoboed his way to California, where he hoped there would be more work and opportunity. During this time he developed a love of travel and a passion for writing songs, especially about the migrants. He wrote hundreds of songs about

these people and their misfortune. Some of these he later recorded as the Dust Bowl Ballads. He eventually made his way to Los Angeles, California and got a job doing a radio show. It was during this time that he got a new singing partner named Maxine Crissman, otherwise known as "Lefty Lou." Their radio broadcasts provided him with a forum from which he could develop his talent for writing and singing songs about social controversies ranging from corruption in politics to Union organizers.

In about 1939 Woody became uncomfortable with all this success and not being one to stay in one place for too long he decided to move east to New York. He had been invited there by his friend, the actor and activist Will Geer, who later played "grandpa" on the television series "The Walton's". Woody and Geer had become friends through Woody's tenuous contact with the Communist Party. In New York he almost became an overnight success, because he played a benefit for the John Steinbeck Committee for Agricultural Workers and there he met Alan Lomax. Mr. Lomax was the assistant in charge of the Archive of American Folksong at the Library of Congress. Impressed with Woody's songwriting ability, he arranged for him to get a contract with RCA Victor Records. During his time in New York, he became acquainted with a number of folksingers and people with leftist ideals among them were Pete Seeger, Lee Hayes and Millard Lampell who had founded a singing group called The Almanac Singers. The Almanac Singers were a socially and politically charged group of people whose interests were in the right of the working man. Woody immediately joined and once said that they were the "only group that rehearsed on stage." The Almanac Singers disbanded after about a year and a few of them went on to form The Weavers. He was now no longer living in poverty and arranged for his wife Mary and the children to join him in New York. However, this settled family life wasn't to last long. Woody was hired by the U.S. government to write the music for a documentary about the Grand Coulee Dam which was commissioned by the Bonneville Power Authority. He accepted the job and left New York with his family and moved to Oregon. The songs he wrote during this time are known as the 'Columbia River songs' and this is thought to be the most creative period in his life. Woody eventually made his way back to New York and by this time the constant traveling had taken its toll on his first marriage. Mary decided not to return and they eventually divorced. While in New York he met a young dancer named Marjorie Mazia and began an affair with her. Around this time Woody began writing his autobiography "Bound For Glory" and it was published in 1943 to much critical acclaim. Because the United States was now involved in the Second World War, Woody decided to join the Merchant Marines. He shipped out with them three times and was torpedoed twice. After the war he and Marjorie married. It was a happy time for him and it seemed that he had finally settled down to family life. They had four children, Cathy, who died tragically in a fire at age four, Arlo, Joady and Nora Lee. During this time he composed some children's songs. The collection was titled 'Songs to Grow On' and it was very successful. Peace and happiness were not to last though. He began behaving erratically and his health started to deteriorate. This caused problems in both his professional and personal life and eventually he and Marjorie separated. No

one could quite pinpoint the problem, but it was suspected that either alcoholism or schizophrenia had something to do with it. Woody headed out to California once again and while there he met and married Anneke Van Kirk. They had one child, but as his behavior worsened their relationship also dissolved. Woody's behavior continued to get worse and in 1952 he was diagnosed with the same disease his mother had died of, Huntington's Chorea. For the next few years he checked himself in and out of Brooklyn State Hospital. In 1956 he was involuntarily committed to Greystone Park, a mental institute in New Jersey. He eventually got to the point where he could not play the guitar or even hold a pen. During this time he was visited by Bob Dylan. Dylan was a huge Woody Guthrie fan and once said he was practically a "Woody Guthrie jukebox." However, by 1961 his condition had gotten so bad that Marjorie moved him back to Brooklyn State Hospital so he could be closer to her and the children. On October 3<sup>rd</sup> 1967, after a fifteen year battle with Huntington's Chorea, he died. In this same year Marjorie formed the Committee to Combat Huntington's Disease and this became her life's work. The gene that causes the disease has been located, but no cure has been found.

He has since been posthumously inducted into the Songwriters' Hall of Fame, the Nashville Songwriters Foundation Inc. and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. In 1996 he was awarded A Lifetime Achievement Award by The North American Folk Music and Dance Alliance.

He was a poet, a musician, a songwriter and a political activist. He lived during a time of great change in the United States and in the world. He stood for the working man and he was passionate about what he believed in - never backing away from controversy. Woodrow Wilson Guthrie will forever be remembered as one of the greatest influences on American folk music.

## Introduction

Woody Guthrie was born in 1912 and died in 1967. During the 55 years of his life, some of the most significant and critical historical events of the twentieth century occurred, including: the Great Depression, the Dust Bowl, World War II, social and political upheavals which resulted in unionism, the cold war and communism. Woody absorbed it all and he recorded many of these events in songs and poetry, capturing the plight of the working man against the government/rich man.



house in Okemah, where Woody grew up

The two photos at the top are of Woody Guthrie's birthplace taken in 1979 by Walter Smalling after a storm had blown it around. The one below was taken earlier. What is your immediate impression? The house was called the London House because the people who built it and lived in it before the Guthries moved in, were named "London." Can you think of other examples of buildings or homes that have been named after a person or family that no longer live there?

Below is a website of Woody's home town. Look through the various pages and talk about your impressions of this small mid-western town. Can you compare it in any way to any other small town in Austria? What are your impressions of the people and places you see photographed?

<http://www.okemah.org/Album/O1.htm>

What do you think it would be like to grow up in a rural area in the United States?

## 2. The Dust Bowl

It was the Dust Bowl that started Woody on his journey across the United States in search of real people and places. The Dust Bowl was also known as the "Dirty Thirties", and was actually a series of dust storms caused by a massive drought that began in 1930 and lasted until 1941. This ecological disaster caused a mass exodus from the Oklahoma panhandle region and also the surrounding Great Plains. Topsoil across millions of acres were blown away because the indigenous sod had been broken for wheat farming. The three words most often uttered by farmers during that harsh decade were "if it rains."

Below you can see diagram of the United States, the area marked in red is known as the Great Plains.



Do you know which state is Oklahoma? Which one is Texas? Can you name any of the other states?

Here is a photo of one of the many dust storms. Describe what you see. What is your impression of this?



Why do you think that this time was also known as the "Dirty Thirties"?

If you have access to the internet you can view an actual dust storm by clicking on the website below:

<http://www.usd.edu/anth/epa/dust.html>

The diagram below shows the exact area that was most effected by the storms.

### The Dust Bowl



### 3. Migrant workers

During the so-called Dust Bowl, people found themselves unable to make a living. On top of the economic crisis, the earth withered and blew away and for farming people this was disastrous. These migrants were led westward by advertisements for work put out by agribusiness in western states such as California. These migrants came to be

called Okies, Arkies, and other derogatory names as they flooded the labour supply of the agricultural fields, causing wages to go down and increasing competition for jobs in a place that couldn't afford it. This was dramatized in the famous novels *The Grapes of Wrath* and *Of Mice and Men* both by John Steinbeck.

Have you read either of these novels by John Steinbeck? If so, what were your impressions?

Here is an excerpt from John Steinbeck's 1939 novel *The Grapes of Wrath*:

*"And then the dispossessed were drawn west- from Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico; from Nevada and Arkansas, families, tribes, dusted out, tractored out. Car-loads, caravans, homeless and hungry; twenty thousand and fifty thousand and a hundred thousand and two hundred thousand. They streamed over the mountains, hungry and restless - restless as ants, scurrying to find work to do - to lift, to push, to pull, to pick, to cut - anything, any burden to bear, for food. The kids are hungry. We got no place to live. Like ants scurrying for work, for food, and most of all for land."*

Who and what do you think John Steinbeck is talking about?

What emotions does this piece of text evoke in you?

What do you think the title *The Grapes of Wrath* means? Is there perhaps a Biblical reference?

How can you relate the meaning of the title to the migrant workers and The Dust Bowl?

**Read the passage below and discuss it in the classroom.**

*Anything worth discussing was worth a song to Woody.... I remember the night he wrote the song "Tom Joad." He said, "Pete, do you know where I can get a typewriter?"*

*I said, "I'm staying with someone who has one."*

*"Well, I got to write a ballad," he said. "I don't usually write ballads to order, but Victor wants me to do a whole album of Dust Bowl songs, and they say they want one about Tom Joad in *The Grapes of Wrath*."*

*I asked him if he had read the book and he said, "No, but I saw the movie. Good movie."*

*He went along to the place I was staying -- six flights walking up -- on East Fourth Street. The friend I was staying with [JERRY OBERWAGER] said, "Sure, you can use my typewriter."*

*Woody had a half-gallon jug of wine with him, sat down and started typing away. He would stand up every few seconds and test out a verse on his guitar and sit down and*

*type some more. About one o'clock my friend and I got so sleepy we couldn't stay awake. In the morning we found Woody curled up on the floor under the table; the half gallon of wine was almost empty and the completed ballad was sitting near the typewriter.*

*And it is one of his masterpieces. It's a long song -- about six minutes -- and it compresses the whole novel into about twenty verses. It doesn't cover every detail, but it gets an awful lot of them.*

FROM: PETE SEEGER, THE INCOMPLETE FOLKSINGER, NEW YORK, NY, 1972, P. 44.

For the title *Of Mice and Men* Steinbeck took a line from a poem by Scottish poet Robert Burns, "The best laid schemes o' mice an' men gang aft aglay." Translated into modern English this verse says, "The best laid schemes of mice and men often go askew."

What do you think this means?

The poem was written after Burns actually disturbed a mouse's nest while he was ploughing a field.

How does it relate to the migrant workers and The Dust Bowl?

Here is a standard English translation of Robert Burns' poem:

*To a Mouse, on turning up her nest with a plough*

*Small, sleek, cowering, timorous beast,  
O, what a panic is in your breast!  
You need not start away so hasty  
With hurrying scamper!  
I would be loath to run and chase you,  
With murdering plough-staff.*

*I'm truly sorry man's dominion  
Has broken Nature's social union,  
And justifies that ill opinion  
Which makes thee startle  
At me, thy poor, earth born companion  
And fellow mortal!*

*I doubt not, sometimes, but you may steal;  
What then? Poor beast, you must live!  
An odd ear in twenty-four sheaves  
Is a small request;*

*I will get a blessing with what is left,  
And never miss it.*

*Your small house, too, in ruin!  
It's feeble walls the winds are scattering!  
And nothing now, to build a new one,  
Of coarse grass green!  
And bleak December's winds coming,  
Both bitter and keen!*

*You saw the fields laid bare and wasted,  
And weary winter coming fast,  
And cozy here, beneath the blast,  
You thought to dwell,  
Till crash! the cruel plough past  
Out through your cell.*

*That small bit heap of leaves and stubble,  
Has cost you many a weary nibble!  
Now you are turned out, for all your trouble,  
Without house or holding,  
To endure the winter's sleety dribble,  
And hoar-frost cold.*

*But Mouse, you are not alone,  
In proving foresight may be vain:  
The best laid plans of mice and men  
Go often awry,  
And leaves us nothing but grief and pain,  
For promised joy!*

*Still you are blest, compared with me!  
The present only touches you:  
But oh! I backward cast my eye,  
On prospects dreary!  
And forward, though I cannot see,  
I guess and fear!*

## 4. The Bum Blockade

The Bum Blockade was actually a series of road blocks that the Los Angeles, California chief of police, James Edgar Davis, initiated. He ordered the police to set up blockades on all major entry points of the California border in order to keep out homeless migrant workers or "bums" from other states during the Great Depression and Dust Bowl era. Many of these people had come because they had answered ads put out by the agricultural industry - or agribusiness.

What is a "bum"? Can you think of other perhaps derogatory words used to describe people who haven't got a job or home?

Below are two articles from The Los Angeles Herald Express. Read them carefully and look up any words or phrases you don't know or understand. Discuss these articles in class.

**[Herald-Express, August 24, 1935]**

### **STAY AWAY FROM CALIFORNIA WARNING TO TRANSIENT HORDES**

*SAN FRANCISCO, August 24.*—Indigent transients heading for California today were warned by H. A. Carleton, director of the Federal Transient Service, "to stay away from California."

Carleton declared they would be sent back to their home States on arrival here due to closing of transient relief shelters and barring of Works Progress Administration work relief in the State to all transients registered after August 1.

"California is carrying approximately 7 percent of the entire national relief load, one of the heaviest of any State in the Union," said Carleton. "A large part of this load was occasioned by thousands of penniless families from other States who have literally overrun California."

Carleton estimated the transient influx at 1,000 a day.

**[Los Angeles Herald-Express, February 6, 1936]**

### **REPORT ALL BEGGARS IS PLEA**

Along California's hundreds of miles of land frontier and on the home front in this city, Los Angeles police battled today to turn back hordes of jobless, penniless transients, who are said to have been pouring into this sunny clime from the wintry east at the rate of 6,000 to 7,000 a month.

Developments in the police campaign included:

1. Police Chief James E. Davis, after a conference with Sheriff E. W. Biscailuz, called on Los Angeles housewives to report immediately all beggars who come to the doors of the city's residential districts.
2. Ernest Besig, of San Francisco, director of the American Civil Liberties Union, a radical organization, demanded criminal and civil actions to halt Los Angeles police activities against the annual midwinter transient movement.
3. Sheriff Biscailuz broadcast to all sheriff's substations orders to enforce the State anti-vagrancy laws in unincorporated territory, with due care on the part of deputies not to hinder any lawful personal rights.
4. On three State "fronts" sharp declines in the number of "gentlemen of the road" were recorded by vigilant police patrols.

Do you think the chief of police did the right thing in trying to keep out migrant farm workers?

Do you think that the police should have let land owners, who placed the advertisements for work, be responsible for this problem?

Can you compare what was happening on the border of the state of California in 1935 with events on the border of Austria and other European countries today?

## 5. In 1929, **The Great Depression** hit the United States.

Write a definition of *The Great Depression* and how it effected the United States and the world. The word "depression" has more than one meaning. Look up the other meanings. Do you think that any other of the meanings are relevant. If so, how? Look up the following terms and people. Write a description of each.

1. Black Tuesday.
2. stock market
3. Hoovervilles
4. Franklin D. Roosevelt

If you have access to a computer please go to the following website:

<http://www.english.uiuc.edu/maps/depression/photoessay.htm>

What are your thoughts on the various photos on this website? What feelings do they arouse in you?

Here are some recipes used by some people during the Depression. Read through them - perhaps you can get together with a classmate and make one of the following as a class project. Why do you think they are recipes from the Depression?

*"A cake handed down from my Great Grandmother when they didn't have much to use in their mixes. Prepare to enjoy the most wonderful thing you ever laid a lip on."  
Original recipe yield: 1 - 9x13 inch pan.*

## *Depression Era Cake*

### **INGREDIENTS:**

- *2 cups strong brewed coffee*
- *1 1/2 cups white sugar*
- *1/2 cup butter*
- *1 cup raisins*
- *1 teaspoon ground allspice*
- *1 teaspoon ground cinnamon*
- *3 cups all-purpose flour*
- *2 teaspoons baking soda*
- *1 teaspoon baking powder*

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### **DIRECTIONS:**

1. *Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Grease and flour a 9x13 inch pan. Sift together the flour, baking soda and baking powder. Set aside.*
2. *In a large saucepan combine the coffee, sugar, butter, raisins, allspice and cinnamon. Bring to a boil, remove from heat and set aside to cool to room temperature.*
3. *Stir in flour mixture until well combined. Pour into a 9x13 inch pan. Bake in preheated oven for 45 to 50 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of cake comes out clean.*

## *Poor Man's Bread*

- 1 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- Water

*Stir in enough water to make a batter and pour into greased skillet. { use a cast iron skillet. Fry until brown on each side like a pancake. Taste great with homemade butter and jam.*

## *Scottish Francies*

- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 tablespoon melted butter
- 1/3 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup rolled oats

*Beat egg until light; add sugar gradually. Then add remaining ingredients. Drop from tip of spoon on to a thoroughly buttered inverted pan. Spread with knife dipped in cold water, into circular shapes. Bake in slow oven 12 minutes.*

## **6. The New Deal.**

The New Deal was President Franklin D. Roosevelt's legislative agenda for rescuing the United States from the Great Depression. It was widely believed that the depression was caused by the inherent instability of the market and that government intervention was necessary to rationalize and stabilize the economy.

What were some of the programs and policies of the New Deal? Do you think the New Deal worked? What were some of the successes and failures? Who was John Maynard Keynes?

A good website for research is:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_new\\_deal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_new_deal)

## 7. World War II

Woody's involvement in World War II was as a Merchant Marine. What exactly are the Merchant Marines? Why do you think Woody joined?

He was a passionate anti-fascist and because of his belief in the working man he got involved, if somewhat tenuously, in the communist party.

"I ain't a communist necessarily, but I been in the red all my life," he once said.

What is your interpretation of this statement?

He also was known to have joked, "Left wing, chicken wing, it don't make no difference to me" and he once said,

"Does the statement above give you an idea about who Woody Guthrie was and what he stood for? Explain your thoughts.

Woody wrote many songs about the war including "Round and Round Hitler's Grave" ..., but one of the best known was "Sinking of the Reuben James" about the sinking of the American Destroyer USS Reuben James. It was not the first ship torpedoed, but it was the first lost. Why do you think Woody felt compelled to write a song about it?

## 8. The Almanac Singers

In 1941, while Woody was living in New York City he became affiliated with The Almanac Singers.

The Almanac Singers were a group of folk musicians who achieved brief popularity in the early 1940s. Members Millard Lampell, Lee Hayes, Pete Seeger and Woody Guthrie began playing together informally after Seeger and Hays had been playing at left-wing political functions for a time. Mainstream national success began after the American Youth Congress meeting in Washington D.C. in February of 1941.

Politics and music remained closely intertwined with the members' political beliefs, which were far-left and occasionally led to controversial associations with the Communist Party USA. Their first release was an album called *Songs for John Doe*, which urged non-intervention in World War II. The second album was *Talking Union*, a collection of labor songs, many of which were intensely anti-Roosevelt.

Go to the website:

<http://www.mp3.com/almanac-singers/artists/8986/biography.html>

What are your thoughts on the Almanac Singers?

Why do you think that there were more people openly associated with the communist party at this time in the United States?

**Joseph McCarthy** was a United States senator from Wisconsin. During the early 1950's McCarthy played on American fears of communist world domination and began a series of "witch hunts" in which Americans from all professions were arbitrarily singled out as possible Communists, and then asked to testify before McCarthy and the Senate Internal Security or the House Un-American Activities committee. Those who refused to testify were cited for contempt and sent to prison. Even those who testified that they were not communists were not believed and people were often intimidated into naming others who were allegedly communist sympathizers. By 1954, McCarthy's unfair tactics came under the scrutiny of the senate and he was eventually censured.

The information above was taken from this website:

[http://libweb.uoregon.edu/med\\_svc/wguthrie/Pages/notable\\_people.html](http://libweb.uoregon.edu/med_svc/wguthrie/Pages/notable_people.html)

This website contains a list of people who were blacklisted during the McCarthy Era.

<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USARED.htm>

What are your thoughts concerning Joseph McCarthy, Blacklisting and what is now known as McCarthyism?

## 9. Huntington's Chorea or Disease

Huntington's Disease is a fatal degenerative brain disorder that slowly destroys both body and mind. Described in 1872 by Long Island, New York physician Dr. George Huntington, the condition came to be known as Huntington's Chorea, a reference to the dance-like, or *choreic*, movements which are often its most visible characteristic.

Early symptoms may include depression, mood swings, forgetfulness, and lack of coordination.

Woody Guthrie was probably the most famous sufferer of this disorder. His wife, Marjorie noticed her husband walking lopsidedly one day in the 1950s. She then began to notice that his speech was becoming slurred but it was only when he began to fly into major rages that she realized something was severely wrong with her husband. Eventually, he lost all ability to talk, to read or walk. The only way he could communicate with his wife and children was by waving his arm at cards printed with the words 'Yes' and 'No'.

The disease was Huntington's Chorea, which is an inherited, degenerative disorder of the Central Nervous System, caused by a dominant gene. This means that everyone who inherits the gene from one of his/her parents WILL develop the disease, and the likelihood of inheriting it is approximately 50%. The specter of this cruel disease continues to hang over the entire Guthrie family.

Woody's two daughters with Mary Jennings inherited the gene and have since died. So far none of his children with Marjorie Mazia have come down with it. Marjorie went on to found the Committee to Combat Huntington's Disease and devoted her life to the cause.

Had you ever heard of Huntington's Chorea?

Do you know of anyone with this disease?

Do you know of any other diseases of the Central Nervous System?

## Part 2

1. *This Land Is Your Land* "focuses on American cultural history of the 1920s-1940s, from the state of Oklahoma, where Woody spent his boyhood, through the Great Depression, the Dust Bowl, F.D.R.'s New Deal and WPA, to World War II. The show follows Woody from California to New York and beyond. It captures the personal narrative of a man who spoke for many who had no public voice."

It is based on a script by Millard Lampell, which is called **California to the New York Island**. Both titles are actual lines from the song "This Land Is Your Land". Read and study the lyrics to the song below. What do you think it is about and why do you think it is one of his most enduring and famous songs.

(*"THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND"*)

*This land is your land, this land is my land  
From California to the New York island  
From the Redwood Forest to the Gulf Stream waters  
This land was made for you and me*

*As I went walking that ribbon of highway  
I saw above me that endless skyway  
I saw below me that golden valley  
This land was made for you and me*

*CHORUS*

*This land is your land, this land is my land  
From California to the New York island  
From the Redwood Forest to the Gulf Stream waters  
This land was made for you and me*

*I've roamed and rambled and I've followed my footsteps  
To the sparkling sands of her diamond desserts  
And all around me a voice was sounding  
This land was made for you and me*

*CHORUS*

*When the sun came shining and I was strolling  
And the wheat fields waving and the dust clouds rolling  
As the fog was lifting a voice was chanting*

*This land was made for you and me*

*CHORUS*

*Nobody living can ever stop me  
As I go walkin' my freedom highway  
Nobody living can make me turn back  
This land was made for you and me*

*CHORUS*

The internet website Wikipedia describes the song as follows:

***This Land is Your Land**" is one of the United States most famous folk songs, written by Woody Guthrie in 1940. It was originally penned in response to Irving Berlin's " God Bless America". Guthrie considered that song unrealistic and complacent, and was tired of hearing Kate Smith\* sing it on the radio. The original last line of the chorus read "God Blessed America for me."*

*The song bothered Woody because he knew that not all Americans are blessed. Guthrie varied the lyrics over time, sometimes including more overtly political verses that often do not appear in recordings or publication.*

*\*A successful American singer born in 1907 and best known for her rendition of "God Bless America".*

Here are the lyrics to God Bless America. Read them through. Why do you think Woody Guthrie hated this song and found it complacent? Look up the word complacent. Do you agree with Woody?

*God Bless America,  
Land that I love  
Stand beside her,  
And guide her,  
Through the night  
With the light from above,  
From the mountains,  
To the prairies,  
To the ocean,  
White with foam,*

*God bless America,  
My home sweet home.  
God bless America,  
My home sweet home*

Here are two verses of the song written by Guthrie that are not often printed along with the more popular version. Discuss why you think that is.

*Was a big high wall there that tried to stop me  
A sign was posted, said "Private Property"  
But on the back side, it didn't say nothing --  
This land was made for you and me.*

*One bright sunny morning in the shadow of the steeple  
By the relief office I saw my people --  
As they stood hungry,  
I stood there wondering  
if this land was made for you and me?*

## 2. Page by page synopsis of the play

### **Page 1**

The play opens with the song *This Train is Bound for Glory* which is appropriate because Woody Guthrie's autobiography is entitled **Bound for Glory**.

Between the stanzas in the song, we are introduced to the various characters in the play.

"Pete Seeger" makes the first appearance and gives a brief description of who Woody Guthrie was.

Next we meet "Woody" who tells a little bit about his background, parents and birthplace.

"Lefty Lou" then comes on stage and describes what it means to play music by ear.

### **Page 2**

The musicians sing the song *Gypsy Davey*.

Pete, then tells the audience about Okemah, Oklahoma, where Woody was born and lived. He explains that during the oil boom, the area was wild and the people lived it up.

The actress playing "Nora Guthrie" explains that Woody's mother became ill and was taken to an insane asylum.

### **Page 3**

Woody tells of living on his own from an early age and how at age 18 he got a letter telling him his mother had died of Huntington's Disease. Woody has fears of getting it too. He tells about getting married to Mary, the sister of one of his singing partners and that they had three children. His uncle Jeff teaches him to play the guitar and then the actors perform *Oklahoma Hills* as The Corncob Trio.

### **Page 4**

Finish singing *Oklahoma Hills*. The characters discuss some historical events and people, such as The Great Depression, The Dust Bowl and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

### **Page 5**

Woody says "Here's a song for Mr. Hoover" meaning Herbert Hoover, who was blamed for the Depression. The song is *So Long it's Been Good To Know Yuh*, which is one of the Dust Bowl ballads that Woody wrote. The characters then speak about what was happening in U.S. politics at the time - that the Republicans (Herbert Hoover) were out and that the democrats (Franklin D. Roosevelt) were in.

### **Page 6**

They talk about The New Deal and sing *Dust Storm Disaster* a song about the dust storms that hit the Midwestern United States.

### **Page 7**

Woody then sings *Talkin' Dust Bowl* about leaving the area and moving to California. We learn about the many thousand "dust bowl refugees" and Americans that have all lost their jobs. Underscore for *Bound for Glory* is played once again.

### **Page 8**

They sing *Bound for Glory*.

Woody explains about the migrant farm workers and how they moved to California, the "promised land."

### **Page 9**

The California police have a different idea about the migrants and it's called the "Bum Blockade" - they let very few people in to work. The actors sing *Do Re Mi* a song about not being welcome in California if you don't have money.

### **Page 10**

We learn about the "hoovervilles" or camp sites where the migrant workers lived. One of them was called "the jungle" and Woody liked to go there and listen to the music the people who lived there made. He explains that it was "clear and honest sounding." The song *Worried Man* is sung by Nora and Lefty Lou, who also sing *Columbus Stockade*.

### **Page 11**

Woody joins in and sings the last verse of *Columbus Stockade*. Then Nora and Lefty Lou sing *Goin' Down That Road Feelin' Bad* which explains how difficult it is to be a homeless farm worker looking for work and living in a camp-settlement.

**Page 12**

A description of daily life in a camp. They all sing *Pastures of Plenty*. Woody tells of the talented singers and musicians that entertained the workers in the evening.

**Page 13**

*Pastures of Plenty* continues. Nora explains that Woody has visited every camp he can get to and has slept, sung and eaten with the people who live there. Woody gets Mary and his children to join him because he has gotten a job singing on the radio. He is hired by the U.S. government to write songs about the Grand Coulee Dam on the Columbia River. He meets Alan Lomax, who helps him to get his songs recorded for Victor Records. Mary and Woody separate because of his wandering lifestyle.

**Page 14**

Pete and Woody discuss folk music and politics, including workers rights and unions. Lefty Lou sings *Union Maid*.

**Page 15**

Pete and Woody talk about the various unions and poor people who will work for nothing and how standing together helps increase wages. End of song *Union Maid*.

**Page 16**

The outbreak of World War II. Woody and Pete talk of the Almanac Singers, a singing group they were a part of, and songs of peace and staying out of the war until they hear more about Hitler, Mussolini and Mr. Hirohito.

A USS Destroyer called the Reuben James is sunk by a German U-boat and they all sing Woody's song *Sinking of the Reuben James* to page 17.

**Page 18**

Next they sing *Talking Merchant Marine*.

Woody tells of being in the Merchant Marines and that he was torpedoed twice. They all sing *The Biggest Thing That Man Has ever Done*.

We find out that Woody gets married again to Marjorie Mazia. They have four children and live in New York.

**Page 19**

Woody begins to develop symptoms of his disease, but keeps on singing and advocating the rights of the working man with his friend Pete. They talk about the unions and right wing and left wing.

**Page 20**

Woody begins to have problems with his temperament. He continues to sing the songs he loves with his folk singing friends. He sings for the common man and against the rich man. He begins to have dizzy spells and is diagnosed with Huntington's Disease, the disease his mother had.

Woody goes into hospital and dies fifteen years later. Underscore of *This Land Is Your Land* plays and Nora, Pete, Lefty Lou and Woody all join in on a famous quote that Woody once said in an opening broadcast for WNEW Radio in 1944.

They sing *This Land Is Your Land*.

### 3. The Music

Why Do you think the play opens with the song *This Train Is Bound For Glory*. Read the words to the song and discuss what you think it means.

Read through the lyrics of the other songs in this order.

*Gypsy Davey*  
*Oklahoma Hills*  
*So Long It's Been Good To Know Yuh*  
*Dust Storm Disaster*  
*This Train Is Bound For Glory*  
*Do Re Mi*  
*Worried Man*  
*Columbus Stockade*  
*Going Down That Road Feeling Bad*  
*Pastures Of Plenty*  
*Union Maid*  
*This Train Is Bound For Glory*  
*Sinking Of The Reuben James*  
*Talking Merchant Marine*  
*The Biggest Thing That Man Has Ever Done*  
*This Land Is Your Land*

Discuss each song and write a brief description of what you think it's about. Do the songs in the play follow his life in a chronological order? And if so, how? Are you able to get an idea of what Woody Guthrie's life was like and what was important to him by doing this?

**4. Make a timeline** of Woody's life from his birth in 1912 to his death in 1967. Include the major events that took place in his life and also in the history of the United States and the world.

The following website could be of assistance:

[http://libweb.uoregon.edu/med\\_svc/wguthrie/Pages/guthrie\\_timeline.html](http://libweb.uoregon.edu/med_svc/wguthrie/Pages/guthrie_timeline.html)

## Part 3

### 1. Woody quotes

Woody Guthrie was one of the most influential folksingers, writers and poets that ever lived in America. In 1943 his autobiography "Bound for Glory" was published.

Below is an excerpt from the book. The text concerns the death of his sister Clara when he was about 7 years old.

*"Clara calls me over to her bed, and makes me laugh at everybody that's crying. She makes me swear and promise that I won't break down and cry like ol' papa and mama, sitting there by the side of her bed. I told her I wouldn't cry, no matter what happened. Then Clara turns her eyes to ask her schoolteacher, 'Did I pass?' And I heard the schoolteacher lady tell Clara, 'Yes, you passed.' And then I saw the teacher touch both Clara's eyes with her fingers and push them closed. I never did cry; I held it back so tight it blinded me. And I ran around and around our house until I finally fell down into papa's arms.*

*'Don't you cry. Don't you never break down and cry, the way your old brother Roy did, not like your roughy-tough papa, not the way your mama cried when she sat there beside the bed with eyes red and hot. Laugh, like me. Be like me. Smile, like I smile.'*

Are you able to understand the dialect that he writes in?  
What emotions does this piece of text evoke in you?

#### **Pete Seeger, June 1967:**

When Woody Guthrie was singing hillbilly songs on a little Los Angeles radio station in the late 1930s, he used to mail out a small mimeographed songbook to listeners who wanted the words to his songs. On the bottom of one page appeared the following:

*"This song is Copyrighted in U.S., under Seal of Copyright # 154085, for a period of 28 years, and anybody caught singin it without our permission, will be mighty good friends of ourn, cause we don't give a dern. Publish it. Write it. Sing it. Swing to it. Yodel it. We wrote it, that's all we wanted to do." W.G.*

"Does the statement above give you an idea about who Woody Guthrie was and what he stood for? Explain your thoughts.

What about the quote below:

Regarding guitar playing, Woody Guthrie once said, "If you play more than two chords, you're showing off."

## From "Woody Sez"

### THIS IS OUR COUNTRY HERE

*This is our country here as far as you can see no matter which way you walk or*

*No matter what spot of it you stand on*

*And when you have crossed her as many times as I have you will see as many ugly things about her as pretty things*

*You will hear whole gangs of travelers and settlers arguing about her.*

*What she is, how she come to be, what you are supposed to do here. and you will hear some argue at you*

*That she is so beautiful you are supposed to spend your life just feeling her pretty parts,*

*Sucking in her sweetest breezes and tasting her fairest odors, looking at her brightest colored scenes,*

*And I would say that gang has the wrong notion.*

*And there are some bunches that tell you she is all ugly and all dirty, that there is nothing good about her, nothing free, nothing clean, that she is all slums, shacks, rot, filth, stink, and bad odors, loud words of bitter flavors,*

*Well, this herd is big and I heard them often and I heard them loud, but I come to think that they too was just as wrong as the first outfit,*

*Because I seen the pretty and I seen the ugly and it was because I knew the pretty part that I wanted to change the ugly part, Because I hated the dirty part that I knew how to feel the love for the cleaner part,*

*I looked in a million of her faces and eyes, and I told myself there was a look on that face that was good, if I could see it there, in back of all of the shades and shadows of fear and doubt and ignorance and tangles of debts and worries,*

*And I guess it is these things that make our country look all lopsided  
to some of us, lopped over onto the good and easy side or over  
onto the bad and the hard side,  
I know that the people that run our desks and offices got so full  
of the desire to grab enough money to run away and hide on, that  
they let this thought run them, instead of the bigger plan,  
well, this has always been a hard word to say, but  
It could very truly be that our office people are doing the best they  
know how to do,  
But we had ought to teach ourselves better and higher than this  
before we run ourselves and put ourselves into our offices.*

Words by Woody Guthrie  
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### **I AIN'T A GONNA KILL NOBODY**

*"I took a bath this morning in six war speeches, and a sprinkle of peace. Looks like everybody is declaring war against the forces of force. That's what you get for building up a big war machine. It scares your neighbors into jumping on you, and then of course they them selves have to use force, so you are against their force, and they're against yours. Look like the ring has been drawn and the marbles are all in. The millionaires has thrown their silk hats and our last set of drawers in the ring. The fuse is lit and the cannon is set, and somebody is in for a frailin. I would like to see every single soldier on every single side, just take off your helmet, unbuckle your kit, lay down your rifle, and set down at the side of some shady lane, and say, nope, I aint a gonna kill nobody. Plenty of rich folks wants to fight. Give them the guns."*

-from WOODY SEZ, a collection of articles written by Woody for the PEOPLE'S WORLD  
Text Copyright (c) 1975 by Woody Guthrie Publications

Read the two pieces taken from "Woody Sez". What do you think of his style of writing?

Does his use of country slang and incorrect use of grammar help underline or emphasize the meaning? Explain your thoughts.

As an exercise, take any of the pieces of text above that were written by Woody Guthrie and see if you can correct the grammar. Work in groups.

Does correcting the grammar help you to understand what he is writing about?

Does it help or hinder the emotions that he is trying to convey?

For a closer look at the magazine *People's World* that Woody Sez appeared in, see the website below. What kind of magazine is it?

<http://www.pww.org/>

## 2. Others about Woody

In Guthrie's autobiography, *Bound For Glory*, **Pete Seeger** said,

*"His songs are deceptively simple. Only after they have become part of your life do you realize how great they are. Any damn fool can get complicated. It takes genius to attain simplicity."*

Do you agree with the last sentence?

### **John Steinbeck:**

*"Woody is just Woody. Thousands of people do not know he has any other name. He is just a voice and a guitar. He sings the songs of a people and I suspect that he is, in a way, that people. Harsh voiced and nasal, his guitar hanging like a tire iron on a rusty rim, there is nothing sweet about Woody, and there is nothing sweet about the songs he sings. But there is something more important for those who listen. There is the will of the people to endure and fight against oppression. I think we call this the American spirit."*

What do you think of the what John Steinbeck has to say?

**Bob Dylan** was so impressed with Woody Guthrie that he used to impersonate him. In 1961 he went to visit him in Greystone Park, a mental hospital in New Jersey. Here is a song written by Dylan. Read it through and write down your impressions.

### **Song To Woody**

by Bob Dylan

*I'm out here a thousand miles from my home,  
Walkin' a road other men have gone down.  
I'm seein' your world of people and things,  
Your paupers and peasants and princes and kings.*

*Hey, hey Woody Guthrie, I wrote you a song  
'Bout a funny ol' world that's a-comin' along.  
Seems sick an' it's hungry, it's tired an' it's torn,  
It looks like it's a-dyin' an' it's hardly been born.*

*Hey, Woody Guthrie, but I know that you know  
All the things that I'm a-sayin' an' a-many times more.  
I'm a-singin' you the song, but I can't sing enough,  
'Cause there's not many men that done the things that you've done.*

*Here's to Cisco an' Sonny an' Leadbelly too,  
An' to all the good people that traveled with you.  
Here's to the hearts and the hands of the men  
That come with the dust and are gone with the wind.*

*I'm a-leaving' tomorrow, but I could leave today,  
Somewhere down the road someday.  
The very last thing that I'd want to do  
Is to say I've been hittin' some hard travelin' too.*

Despite his newfound economic success, Woody despised radio executives' censorship of his music. Woody's wife, **Mary Jennings**, once said of Woody: "It was as if he identified so deeply with the down and outers, he couldn't quite be comfortable as an up and comer."

Do you know what she meant by this?

### **3. Woody's descendants**

Woody's second marriage to Marjorie Mazia Guthrie produced four children, three of whom are alive today. All three are involved in his legacy.

His son, Arlo Guthrie, is a singer and songwriter famous for the song *Alice's Restaurant*. For more information on Arlo Guthrie visit the website:

<http://www.arlo.net/>

Daughter, Nora Guthrie is the executive director of the Woody Guthrie Foundation and Archives.

Son, Joady Guthrie is a writer.

Listed below are some websites to check out for further reading and research:

<http://www.univie.ac.at/Anglistik/easyrider/data/home.htm>

<http://www.woodyguthrie.org/biography.htm>

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wwghhtml/wwghome.html>

<http://www.woodyguthrie.com/>

# APPENDIX

## This Train Is Bound for Glory

Words and music adapted by  
Woody Guthrie

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The melody starts on a whole note E4, followed by quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, and a half note E4. The lyrics "This train is bound for glo-ry, this train." are written below the notes. Above the staff is a guitar chord symbol "E".

The second staff continues the melody with a whole note E4, followed by quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, and a half note E4. The lyrics "This train is bound for glo-ry, this train." are written below. Above the staff are guitar chord symbols "1", "B7", and "1".

The third staff continues the melody with a whole note E4, followed by quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, and a half note E4. The lyrics "This train is a - leav - ing town, hit - ting the road and" are written below. Above the staff are guitar chord symbols "E" and "A".

The fourth staff continues the melody with a whole note E4, followed by quarter notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, and a half note E4. The lyrics "head - ing on down. This train is bound for glo-ry, this train!" are written below. Above the staff are guitar chord symbols "E", "B7", and "E".

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# Oklahoma Hills

Words and music by  
Jack and Woody Guthrie

Man-y a month has come and gone since I wan-dered from my  
home in those Ok - la - ho - ma hills where I was born.  
Man-y a page of life has turned, Man-y a les-son I have  
learned, while I feel like in those hills I still be - long.  
**CHORUS**  
Way down yon-der in the In-di - an Na-tion I ride my po-ny on the  
Re - ser - va - tion, in those Ok - la - ho - ma hills where I was born. Oh,  
way down yon-der in the In - di - an Na - tion, A cow - boy's life is my  
oc - cu - pa - tion, on those Ok - la - ho - ma hills where I was born.  
gone with the Gyp - sy Da - vey, she's gone with the Gyp - sy Dave.

# So Long, It's Been Good To Know You

Words and music by  
Woody Guthrie

C G7  
I've sung this song, but I'll sing it a - gain, of the  
C G7 C  
place that I lived on the wild wind-y plains, in the month of  
F C  
A - pril, the coun - ty called Gray, here's what all of the  
G7 C CHORUS  
peo - ple there say: Well, it's so long, it's been good to  
G7 C  
know you; So long, it's been good to know you; So long, it's  
F C G7  
been good to know you; this dus - ty old dust is a - get - ting my home,  
C  
and I got to be drift - ing a - long.

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# Do Re Mi

Words by (and music adapted by)  
Woody Guthrie

Lots of folks back east, they say; leav-ing home  
ev - 'ry day, beat-ing a hot old dus-ty trail to the Ca - li-for-nia  
line. Cross the des - ert sands they roll, get - ting out of that  
old dust-bowl think they're go-ing to a su-gar bowl, but  
- here's what they find. For the po - lice at the  
port of en - trance say, "You're num - ber four - teen  
thou - sand for to - day." Oh, if you ain't got the Do Re  
Mi, boys, if you ain't got the Do Re Mi, Bet-ter go back  
beau - ti - ful Tex-as, Ok - la - ho - ma, Kan - sas Geor-gia, Ten - nes  
see. Ca - li - for - nia's a Gar - den of E - den, a  
pa - ra - dise to live in or see. But be - lieve it or  
not, you won't find it so hot, if you ain't got the Do Re Mi.

# Goin' Down This Old Dusty Road

Additional words and music adapted by  
Woody Guthrie

The musical score for "Goin' Down This Old Dusty Road" is written in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It consists of three staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 2/4 time signature. The melody starts on a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The lyrics "I'm blow-ing down this old dust-y road, Lord, Lord, I'm" are written below the first staff. The second staff continues the melody with quarter notes D5, E5, F#5, and G5. The lyrics "blow-ing down this old dusty road\_\_\_. I'm blow-ing down this" are written below the second staff. The third staff concludes the melody with quarter notes A5, B5, C6, and D6. The lyrics "old dust-y road, Lord, Lord, and I ain't gonna be treat-ed this-a-way\_\_." are written below the third staff. Chord symbols E, A, and B7 are placed above the notes in the first, second, and third staves respectively.

I'm blow-ing down this old dust-y road, Lord, Lord, I'm  
blow-ing down this old dusty road\_\_\_. I'm blow-ing down this  
old dust-y road, Lord, Lord, and I ain't gonna be treat-ed this-a-way\_\_.

# Pastures of Plenty

Words by (and music adapted by)  
Woody Guthrie

The musical score for "Pastures of Plenty" is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody starts on a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The lyrics "It's a might-y hard row that my poor hands has hoed." are written below the first staff. The second staff continues the melody with quarter notes D5, E5, F#5, and G5. The lyrics "My poor feet has tra-veled a hot dus - ty road," are written below the second staff. The third staff continues the melody with quarter notes A5, B5, C6, and D6. The lyrics "Out of your Dust Bowl and west - ward we rolled and your" are written below the third staff. The fourth staff concludes the melody with quarter notes E6, F#6, G7, and A7. The lyrics "des - erts was hot and your moun - tains was cold.\_\_\_\_\_" are written below the fourth staff. Chord symbols D and (Bm) are placed above the notes in the first and second staves respectively.

It's a might-y hard row that my poor hands has hoed.  
My poor feet has tra-veled a hot dus - ty road,  
Out of your Dust Bowl and west - ward we rolled and your  
des - erts was hot and your moun - tains was cold.\_\_\_\_\_

# Union Maid

Words by (and music adapted by)  
Woody Guthrie and The Almanac Singers

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The melody is accompanied by guitar chords indicated above the staff. The lyrics are written below the notes.

There once was a un-ion maid, she nev-er was a-  
fraid of goons and ginks and com-pa-nyfinks, And the dep-u-ty sher-iffs th-  
made the raids; She went to the un-ion hall When a meet-ing it was  
called, And when the com-p'ny boys came 'round, She al-ways stood her ground.

**CHORUS**  
Oh, you can't scare me, I'm stick-ing to the un-ion,  
I'm stick-ing to the un-ion, I'm stick-ing to the un-ion,  
Oh, you can't scare me, I'm stick-ing to the un-ion,  
I'm stick-ing to the un-ion 'Til the day I die.

**Chords:** A7, D, G, D, A7, D, E7, A7, D, G, D, A7, D, G, D, A, A7, D, G, D, A, A7, D.

# Reuben James

Words and Additional music by  
Woody Guthrie and The Almanac Singers

The musical score is written in a single system with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats (B-flat major/D minor). The time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the notes, and guitar chords are indicated above the staff. The score is divided into a verse and a chorus.

**Verse:**

Have you heard of a ship called the good Reu- ben  
James. Manned by hard fight-ing men, both of hon- or and  
fame. She flew the stars and stripes of the land of the  
free, but to- night she's in her grave at the bot- tom of the sea.

**CHORUS:**

Tell me what were their names? Tell me what were their  
names? Did you have a friend on the good Reu-ben James? What were their  
names? Tell me what were their names? Did you have a friend on the good Reu-ben James?

**Chords:** B<sup>b</sup>(A), F7(E7), B<sup>b</sup>(A), E<sup>b</sup>(D), F7(E7), B<sup>b</sup>(A), E<sup>b</sup>(D), F7(E7), B<sup>b</sup>(A).

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# The Biggest Thing Man Has Ever Done

Words by (and music adapted by)  
Woody Guthrie

(Solo)

Musical score for "The Biggest Thing Man Has Ever Done" in C major. The score consists of four staves of music with lyrics underneath. Chords are indicated above the notes: C, G7, C, F, C, F, C, G7, C.

I'm just a lone-some tra-vel-ler, the great his-tor-i-cal  
bum. High-ly ed-u-ca-ted, from hist-'ry I have come. I  
built the Rock of A-ges, it was in the year of One, and  
that was a-bout the big-gest thing that man has ev-er done.

# This Land Is Your Land

Words and music by  
Woody Guthrie

Musical score for "This Land Is Your Land" in G major. The score consists of four staves of music with lyrics underneath. Chords are indicated above the notes: G, C, G, D7, G, C, D7, G.

This land is your land, this land is my land,  
From Ca-li-for-nia to the New York Is-land.  
From the red-wood for-est to the Gulf Stream  
wa-ters..... this land was made for you and me\_\_\_\_\_.