



Music module

“Bilingual classes”

5. Understanding the song lyrics - theme “Servitude/freedom of slaves”

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1. Content and language of the song "Ain't got no, I got life"

After developing the structure of both songs in phase 4, the students now apply their knowledge and ability to the content.

Like the entire song, the title is made up of 2 parts, 1. "Ain't got no", 2. "I got (life)".

The first part is about possession, a host of things are listed that are needed in order to be somebody in society, an own house, a home, perfume, school etc. (I have, therefore I am). The I does not actually possess these things. The result is "I have not, therefore I am not, I am nobody". Through repetition and double negation, the author illustrates here how slaves were robbed of their cultural, historical, religious and family roots.

The second part is about the things that the I possesses; in the main, parts of the body are listed so as to be able to say triumphantly that the I exists, is alive, possesses the most important thing in itself, namely life.

The conclusion is now the opposite to that in part 1. Now "I have, therefore I am".

The entire text uses the opposing forms of colloquial language as well as combinations of the quantity indications *some*, *any* and *no*.

The entire song and above all the second part evokes the struggle of the slaves for freedom and equality. The melody underlines this statement. In this context, we refer to the role of singing for slaves, their sole weapon and their sole consolation.

2. Discussion of the title and initial hearing

The title is written (projected) on the blackboard and the students are required to divide it into its parts.

Following this, they must then identify as many elements as possible on both parts through listening; these will be listed in 2 columns on the blackboard.

3. Completion exercises

In order to achieve a detailed understanding of the text, they are then required to complete a text. The first task is about the phonetic differentiation of similar words, the second about the use of the word field "parts of the body".

The following Internet activity is suitable for independent, long-term repetition:

www.lyricsgaps.com

NINA SIMONE 'S AIN 'T GOT NO-I GOT A LIFE

1) Choose the correct word as you hear.

Ain't got no _____ (home/hole), ain't got no _____ (shoots/shoes)
Ain't got no _____ (money/many), ain't got no _____ (class/clash)
Ain't got no _____ (shirts/skirts), ain't got no _____ (sweater/shelter)
Ain't got no _____ (perfume/perform), ain't got no _____ (bear/beer)
Ain't got no _____ (man/mane)

Ain't got no _____ (matter/mother), ain't got no _____ (future/culture)
Ain't got no _____ (friends/fresh), ain't got no _____ (schooling/shooting).
Ain't got no _____ (laugh/love), ain't got no _____ (main/name)
Ain't got no _____ (cricket/ticket), ain't got no _____ (broken/token)
Ain't got no _____ (God/gold)

What about God?
Why am I alive anyway?
Yeah, what about God?
Nobody can take away

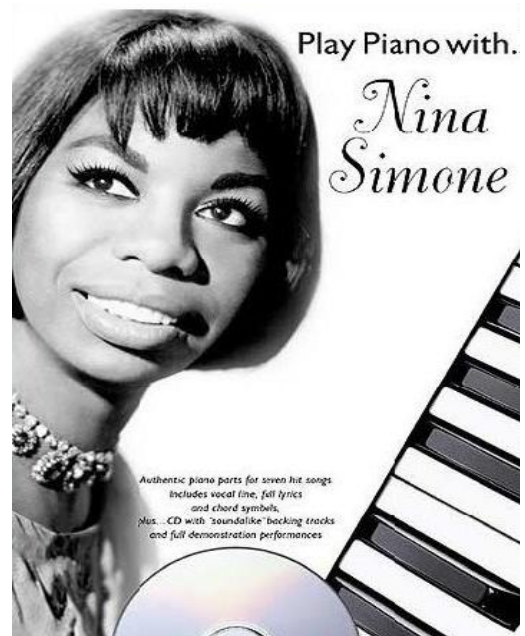
2) Complete with parts of the body. Some of the words are actions made with parts of the body.

I got my _____, I got my _____
I got my _____, I got my _____
I got my _____, I got my _____
I got my _____, I got my _____
I got my _____, I got my _____
I got my _____, I got my boobs

I got my _____, I got my _____
I got my _____, I got my _____
I got my _____, I got my _____
I got my _____, Got my _____
I got my _____, I got my _____
I got my _____, Got my _____

I've got life , I've got my freedom
I've got the life

And I'm gonna keep it
I've got the life
And nobody's gonna take it away
I've got the life



4. Further work

Here are a couple of links for further work and more fundamental understanding:

Black people activity links: [worksheets](#)

Black history - timeline: [timeline](#)

[Martin Luther King](#): Possible joint unit with the German teacher (see point 3 – “Freedom-Freiheit”)

Nina Simone and Black culture - [video](#)