



LESSON PLAN: Focus on the Lyrics of *Thinking of My Home*

OVERVIEW

Examining the lyrics of a new piece before learning to sing it helps students understand and interpret what they are singing about and provides a context for the music. Students are better able to perform with more meaning and clarity. Chen Yi uses an old Chinese poem by Li Bai (701-762) as her text.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- Copies or display of the lyrics of *Thinking of My Home* (copy on the next page)

LEARNING GOAL

After reading the song lyrics out loud as poetry and discussing the meaning of the text, students will make some meaning of the ideas expressed in *Thinking of My Home* by connecting them to their own personal experiences in a classroom discussion.

PROCESS

1. Display song lyrics electronically or with print copies. Choose a format for reading the lyrics out loud. For example:
 - Ask sections of the choir to read specific lines of the poem as an informal choral reading.
 - Ask a small group of individual students to prepare a choral reading with solo and group lines to be presented to the rest of the choir.
 - Whole choir reads together.
 - Another format of your choosing.
2. In small or whole group discussion, ask students to “unpack” the text; what are the words expressing? Ask if they can connect the ideas in the text to their own lives.
 - When have they experienced the light from a full shining moon?
 - How does bright moon-shine look to them?
 - What might they see/imagine/think of when they look up at the moon in the dark of the night?
 - What do they think the “frost on the ground” might be?
 - What might the poet be expressing when he talks of “thinking of my home.” What does this mean to them? Have they ever been away from home and missed it? Does being homesick seem worse at night then it does during the day?

EXTENSIONS

- Read about Li Bai, one of China’s beloved poets and respond to the poem using the suggestions in the lesson [“Li Bai and His Beloved Poem.”](#)

ASSESSMENT

Use the impromptu choral reading of the lyrics as an informal assessment of student’s use of expressive speech to deliver the meaning of the text.



Thinking of My Home

**Moonlight in front of my bed,
Is it frost on the ground I guess?
Lift up my eyes, gazing at the
moon,
Low down my head, thinking of
my home.**

Li Bai (701-762 CE)

